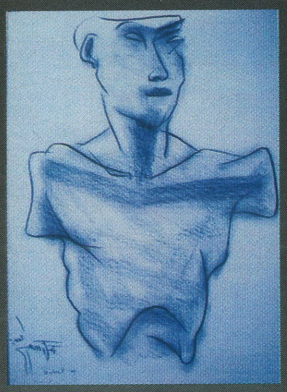
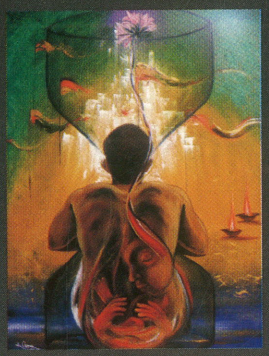
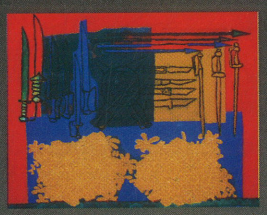
NEW DELHI VOLUME VII QUARTER II-III 2010 RS. 150

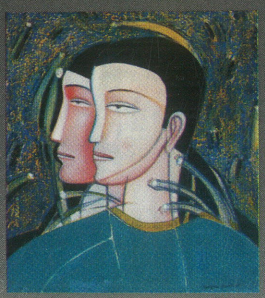
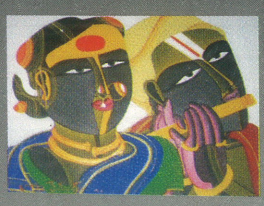
CREATIVE MIND

The Magazine on Literature, Art & Culture

Ram V. Sutar | F.N. Souza | Jyoti Bhatt | Suvaprasanna | Hemi Bawa | Thota Vaikuntam | Mahasweta Devi | Samir Aich | Subrata Kundu | V.S. Rahi | Dharmendra Rathore | Keshav Malik | Subhra Mazumdar | R.S. Yadav | Vincent Van Ross | S.S. Bhatti | Tanmaya | Manjunath Kamath | Vinod Bhardwaj | Sujata Choudhry | K. Srilata | Archana B. Sapra | Geeta Chandran | Pankaj Mistry | College of Art Chandigarh | Epicentre Art Mart



ARTISTS

Amruth Sahu

Gouranga Bariki

Indu Tripathy

Jatin Das

Parthasarathy Pal

Prabhakar Kolte

Polakesh Mandal

Ram Dongre

Renuka Sondhi

Ritu Chopra

Malikarjun Shetty

Tapan Dash

Thota Vaikuntam

la

LAVANYA ART

Confluence of Visual and Performing Art

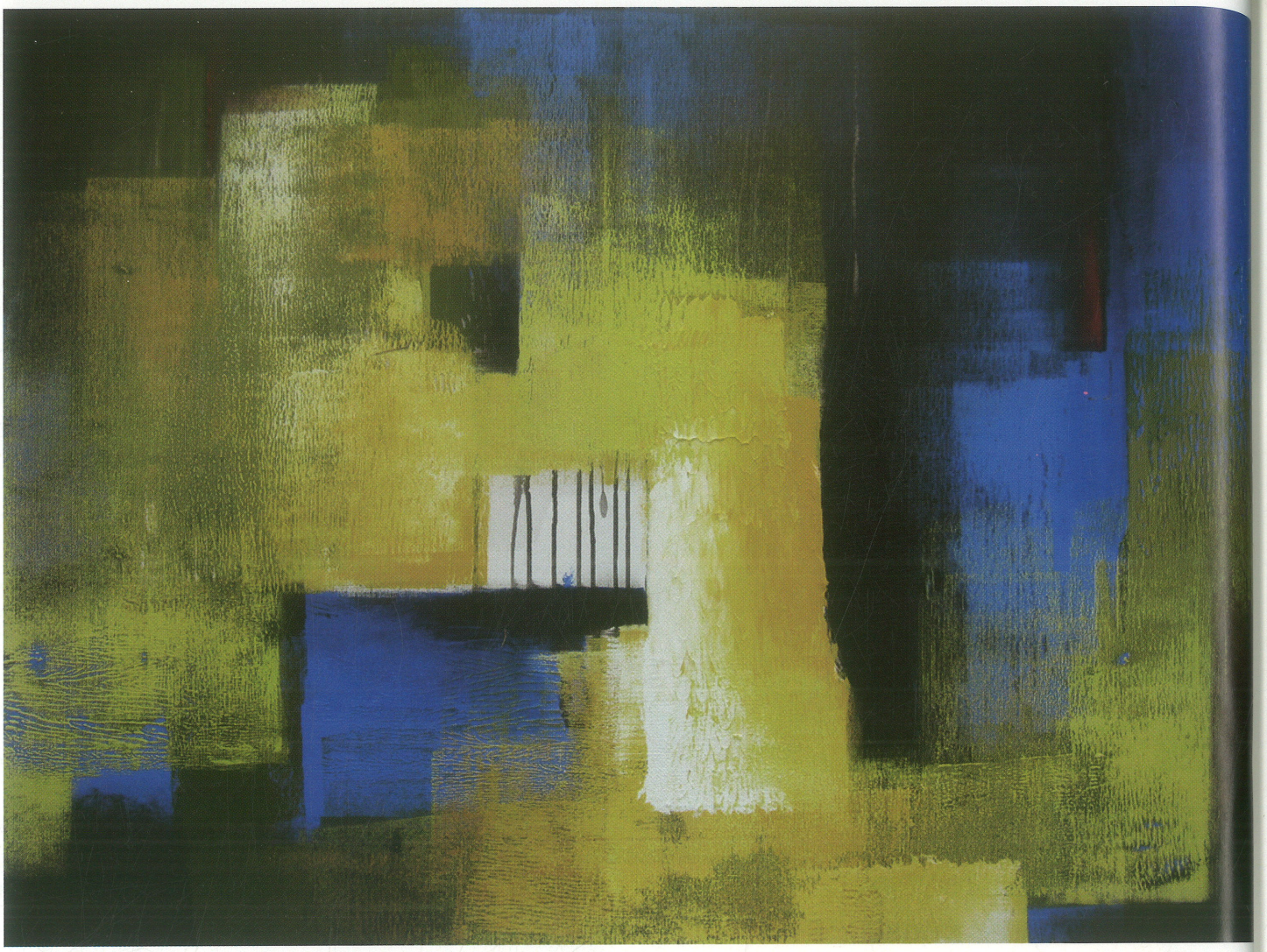
lavanyaart@gmail.com lavanyaart@hotmail.com

From 22nd December 2010 to 10th January 2011
at
Studio Vasant - 22, (G.F.), Hauz Khas Village
Street No. 2, New Delhi-110062

MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

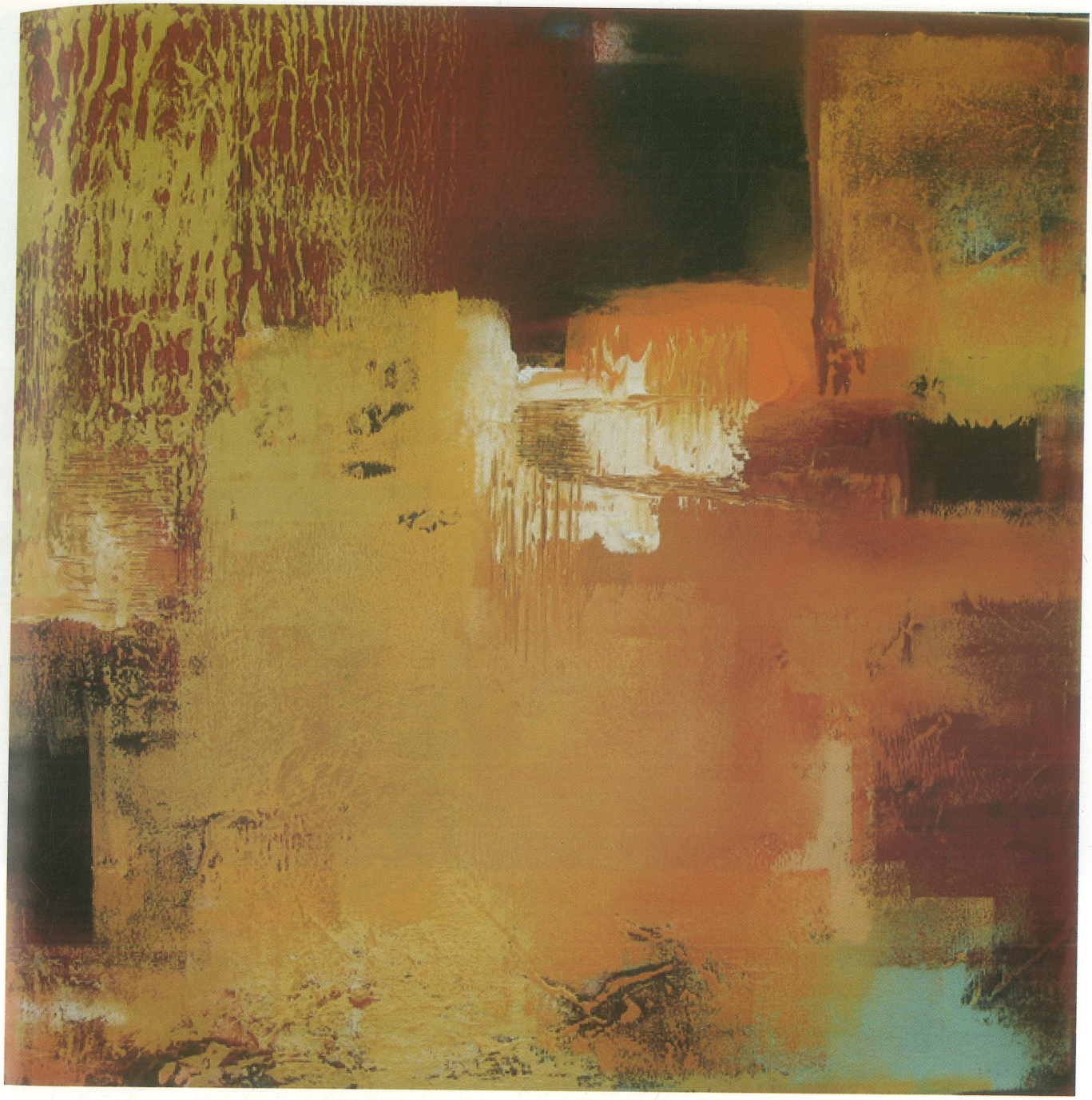
B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222



MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

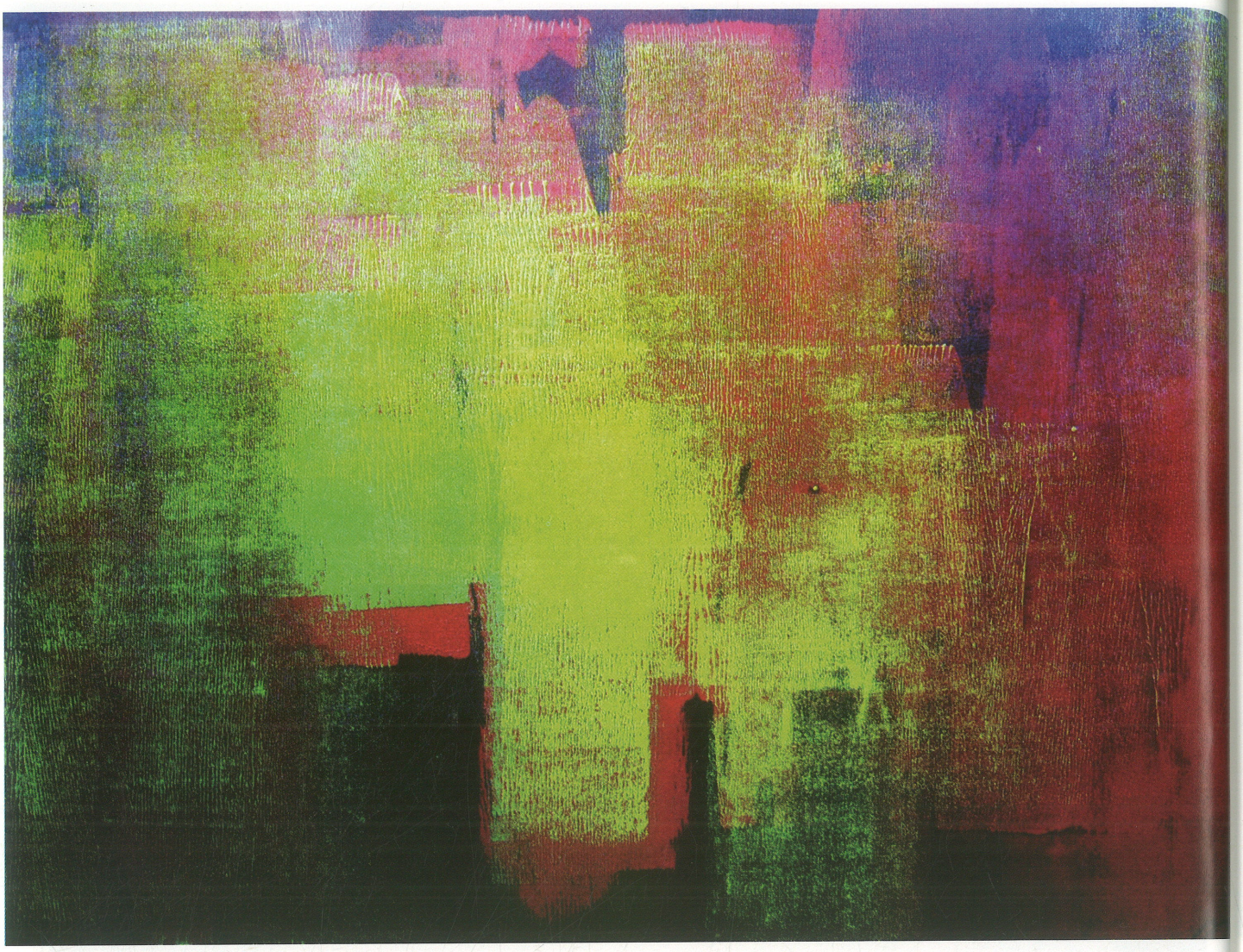
B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222



MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222



MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222

MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222

MRINMOY BARUA

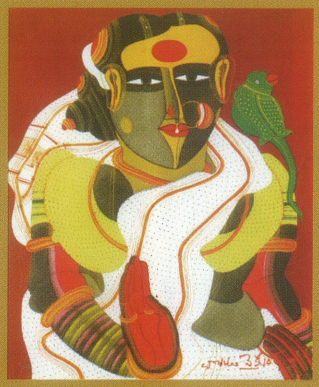
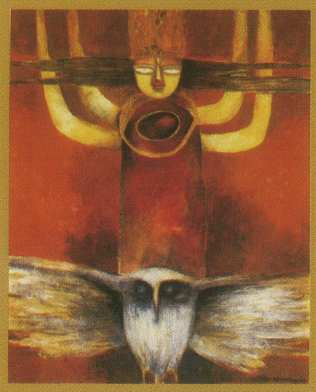
Ati
art gallery

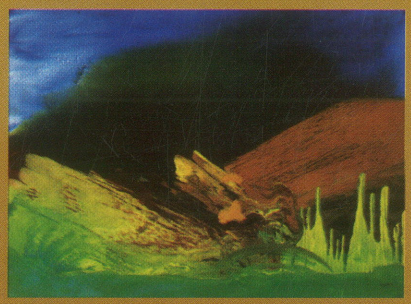
B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222

MRINMOY BARUA

Ati
art gallery

B-14, Friends Colony (W), New Delhi -110 065
E-mail: aarti@atiart.com • poonam@atiart.com • atiart@gmail.com
Tel. : + 91 11 41327779, Mobile : + 91 9810022600, 9810806222



CONTENTS

Editorial

10 Commonwealth Blues - by Vincent Van Ross

Photo Essay

12 Glances - by CMT

Cover Story

16 An Interview of Master Sculptor Ram V. Sutar- by Vincent Van Ross

Feature

108 Voice to Voiceless of Indian Society- by Dr. Ashok K. Choudhury

Essay

24. Computer Painting - A New Mode of Artistic Creation- by Dr. S.S. Bhatti

128 Contemporary Art and the Problem of Conservation- by C.B. Gupta

140 Print Making- by Jyoti Bhatt

146 Women Artists of Rajasthan-A Mix of Tradition with Modernity- by Dr. Archana Rani

Profile

28 Samir Aich- by Mithum Pramanik

46 Hemi Bawa - by Santanu Ganguly

73 The Art of Suvaprasanna - by Archana B Sapra

78 V.S. Rahi - by R.S. Yadav

96 Vigyan Vrat - by R.S. Yadav

102 Jiten Sahu - by Subhra Mazumdar

Interview

76 Thota Vaikuntam - by Renu Rana

Criticism

32 Some Recent Sculptures & Installations by Dharmenrdra Rathore - by Rajesh Singh

88 Communing with Spirit of Forms : Focus on Sushil Vatsa - by Keshav Malik

99 Deft Strokes from Reality to Fantasy : Focus on Anup K Chand - by Kasturi Ray

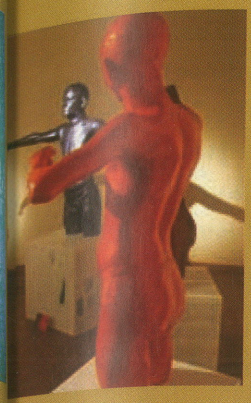
121 Contemporaneity with Traditional Quintessence - by Vikash Nand Kumar

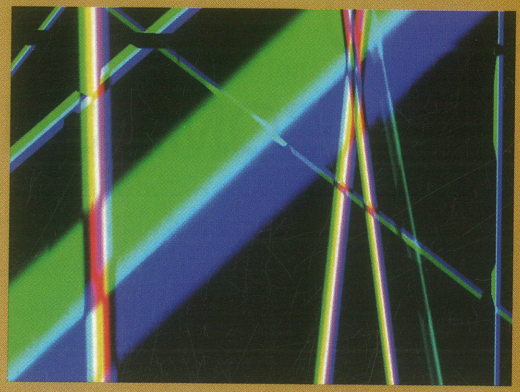
Tribute

40 Subrata Kundu : Tribute to an Innovative Artist- by Vincent Van Ross

Art Mart

44 Second Epicentre Art Mart- by CMT





CONTENTS

Photography

56 Reverie - by Pankaj Mistry

Poem

14 A Page from the Diary- by Sujata Chaudhry
39 The Deer Hunt by Women- by Vinod Bhardwaj
83 Words, All Those Words - by Subhajit Sen
87 Poisoned Love - by Christopher Arkell
91 The Ninth Month : Spent Waiting- by K. Srilata
131 In the Foot of the Himalayas - by Roop Chand

Short Story

48 Eternal - by Moushumi Kandali

Cartoon

117 Penniing the Pencil - by Tanmaya

Institution

134 Sixty Years Old Institution with a Century Old Glorious Heritage : Govt. College of Art, Chandigarh - by D.S. Kapoor

Gallery

84 Suruchi Art Gallery - by Subhra Mazumdar

Art Review

36 The F.N. Souza Show - by R.S. Yadav
59 A Meditation Called Drawing - by Sudhakaran P.
62 Manjunath Kamath - by Renu Rana
92 Art Show by Lavanya - by CMT
105 Devoted to Art - by Renu Rana
124 Deepak Sonar's Serenity - by Sailendra Tiwari
126 Hitendra Singh Bhati - by CMT

Culture

94 In Step with Paradise : Rhythems to the Poetry of Kashmir - by Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor and Sharon Lowen
132 Understanding Shiva's Dance - by Geeta Chandran

Book Review

152 Review of 10 Books - by Santanu Ganguly

Music Review

155 Review of 7 Music CDs - by Santanu Ganguly

Kaleidoscope

158 News in Brief

'Faith & Forbearance'

CREATIVE MIND
The Magazine on Literature Art and Culture

Volume VII, Quarter II-III, 2010
Rs. 150/-

Published from New Delhi

Publisher & Managing Editor
Manoj Kumar Tripathy

Editorial Advisor
Yogendra Bali

Editors
Vincent Van Ross
Archana Bahl Sapra
Renu Rana

Marketing
Manoj Kumar Tripathy
Chandan Chakravorty
Monika Aggarwal
Mithun Pramanik

Designing & Layout
Indu Tripathy
C.S. Rawat

Photography - Indranil Dey

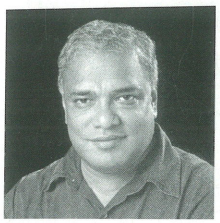
CREATIVE MIND PUBLICATIONS
B-84, Duggal Colony, Khanpur Extn.
New Delhi-110062
E-mail:
creativemindpublications@hotmail.com
creativemind_p@yahoo.com
T.: 09210455360, 09999262643,
011-65692977

Printed at DOT Printers, WZ-441
Naraina Village, New Delhi - 110028

Cover
Sculpture by Ram V. Sutar
Photo : Vincent Van Ross

EDITORIAL

COMMONWEALTH BLUES



Delhi became the venue of hustle and bustle for the nineteenth Commonwealth Games (CWG) when India played host to Commonwealth Games 2010 from October 3 to October 14, 2010. Commonwealth Games is the second largest world class, multi-sport event in the world after Olympic Games.

Commonwealth Games made a humble beginning at Hamilton, Canada in 1930 in which 11 countries participated. Since then these games have been held at an interval of four years except for the years 1942 and 1946 which were hit by the ravages of World War-II (1939-1945).

Initially, the Commonwealth Games were known as British Empire Games from 1930 to 1950. In 1954, these games took on a new name "British Empire and Commonwealth Games" and continued to be called so until 1966. From 1970 to 1974, it was called British Commonwealth Games. In 1978, it was finally christened "Commonwealth Games." Participation in these games has grown by leaps and bounds.

This is the first time that India has hosted the Commonwealth Games and the second time that an Asian nation has organised these games after Malaysia hosted the CWG in 1998.

With a whopping budget of 70,000 crore rupees (that is more than a hundred times the original budget for CWG 2010), the Commonwealth Games is undoubtedly the largest ever multi-sport event to be hosted by India. In all, 72 countries representing former British colonies or their dependencies participated in the Commonwealth Games 2010.

The Commonwealth Games 2010 was expected to boost the tourist inflow into India with an additional 100,000 tourists this year. With the games opening in the beginning of October, the tourist season would have started at least a fortnight before the usual dates for the beginning of tourist season. The additional inflow of tourists that were being counted on included sportspersons, officials and delegates from 71 nations as also family members and friends of these sportspersons to cheer them in addition to sports tourists from several countries to witness these games.

If we had understood the magnitude of the Commonwealth Games 2010, we would have prepared ourselves to introduce the delegates and visitors from over 70 countries to the rich diversity of Indian art. Promoters of Indian art could have jointly canvassed with the organizers of CWG and relevant ministries to make this happen.

Unfortunately, the people who are responsible for promoting Indian art underestimated the potential of this mega event and literally let it pass by. This was a wonderful opportunity to showcase various forms, styles and mediums of Indian art; artworks of artists belonging to different schools of art; and, artworks belonging to different time periods.

An "India International Art Fair" was organized for the first time at Pragati Maidan in Delhi this September ahead of the Commonwealth Games. The teething troubles of this maiden effort were quite obvious. One thing that failed to go down the throats of the participants is the discriminatory pricing of stalls. Also, the media was conspicuous by its absence. The Art Mart-II put up by Epicentre at Gurgaon in the same month was a better organized event.

The National Museum at Janpath, New Delhi put up a small show on the traditional games and sports

of India on this occasion drawing exhibits from its collection of sports related articles and art works.

Apart from this, the National Museum hosted a major show from one of the Commonwealth nations- Canada-under the cultural exchange programme in collaboration with The National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa and the National Museum Institute, New Delhi. "Sanaugavut: Inuit Art from the Canadian Arctic" showcases indigenous art by artists and sculptors belonging to northern Canada that falls under the arctic region.

The National Gallery of Modern Art organized a photo exhibition entitled "Historic Delhi: Early Explorations of the Camera, c. 1860-1950" in collaboration with Alkazi Foundation for Arts. There were some interesting photo exhibitions at the India Habitat Centre as well.

The Lalit Kala Akademi organized a major art show featuring several art galleries and over a hundred artists. However, the criteria for selection of galleries and participants for this show were unclear.

There were several shows at other art galleries and there were some individual efforts but the art community failed to come together to cash in on the opportunity offered by such a mega event.

The National School of Drama also presented several plays as did other theatres in Delhi. Besides these, there were several colorful cultural programmes organized by government agencies.

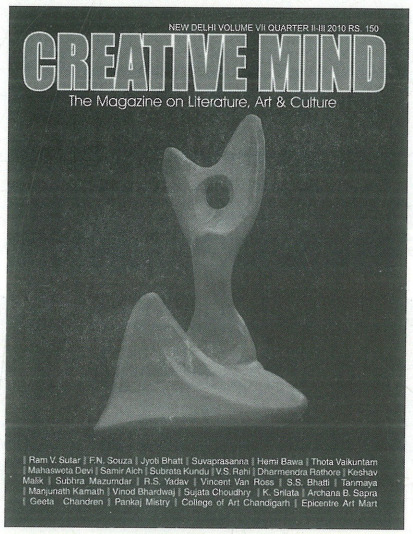
The Commonwealth Games 2010 was a one in a million opportunity to showcase and introduce Indian Art to so many countries in one go. The Art community should have gone hammer and tongs to draw maximum benefit from this god sent opportunity. At a time when the art market in India is still reeling under an indefinite slump, we could have capitalized on a great opportunity.

Agreed, the Commonwealth Games itself seemed to be a non-starter. If the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dixit had not thrown in their weight behind the games, things could have ended up in a major embarrassment to the nation. With their strong intervention, we managed to show the world that if we are not good at working to deadlines in a planned way, we are at least good crisis managers.

Besides the organizational glitches of the Commonwealth Games, the tourism ministry and the hospitality industry also failed to show any vitality in promoting tourism on this occasion. If they had worked together, they might have shown better results. The performance of the Indian art community was no better on this count considering the fact that the sales graph did not show any significant rise.

Going by the concerns that haunted our minds a week before the beginning of the Commonwealth Games, we fared reasonably well on that front. All is well that ends well. Now that it is all over, we might as well do some soul-searching and learn from our past mistakes. ■

- Vincent Van Ross


NEW DELHI VOLUME VII QUARTER II-III 2010 RS. 150
CREATIVE MIND
The Magazine on Literature, Art & Culture
| Ram V. Sutar | F.N. Souza | Jyoti Bhatt | Suvaprasanna | Hemi Bawa | Thota Vaikuntam | Mahasweta Devi | Samir Aich | Subrata Kundu | V.S. Rahi | Dharmendra Rethore | Keshav Malik | Subhra Mazumdar | R.S. Yadav | Vincent Van Ross | S.S. Bhatti | Tanmaya | Manjunath Kamath | Vinod Bhardwaj | Sujata Choudhry | K. Srilata | Archana B. Sapra | Geeta Chandren | Pankaj Mistry | College of Art Chandigarh | Epicentre Art Mart

ARTICLES:

E-mail/courier your articles
alongwith your short bio-data & passport size
photograph to

MANOJ KUMAR TRIPATHY
Publisher & Managing Editor
"CREATIVE MIND"
B-84, Duggal Colony, Khanpur Extn.,
New Delhi-110062
Phone: 09210455360, 09999262643
Email: creativemindpublications@hotmail.com
creativemind_p@yahoo.com

GLANCES

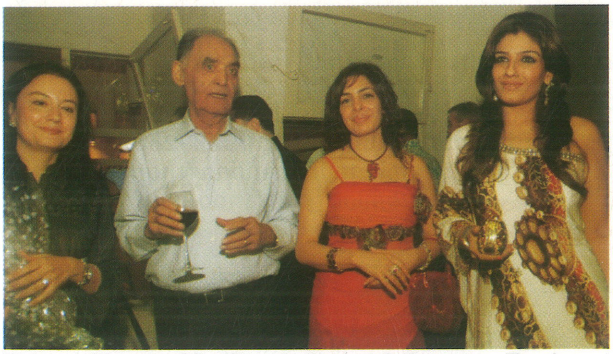
Dr. Alka Pande (R) with a friend at Alliance Francaise

Sunil Das, Dhiraj Choudhury, Jogen Choudhary & Others at Town Hall, Kolkata

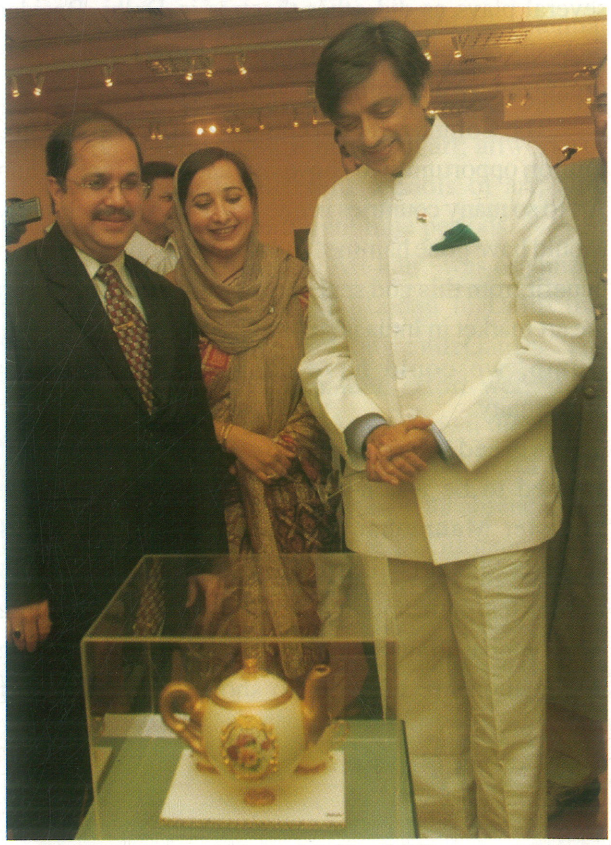
Satish Gujral, Ranjita & Mrs. Gujral at LKA Gallery

Mrs. Anu Bajaj with a friend at Visual, IHC

Uma Nair and Tripad Kalra at LKA



Shivani Chawla, Mr. Chawla,Nawaj & Raveena Tandon at Olive Bar and Kitchen, Mehrauli



Mr. Sayed, Farah Sayed & Shashi Tharoor at IHC

GLANCES

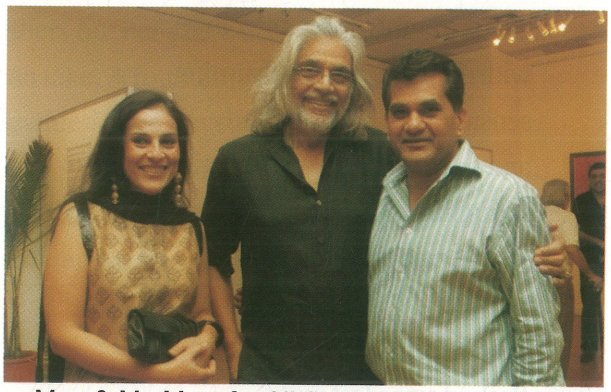
Mr. Bitta, Mr. Prasad, Nawaj and a friend at Olive Bar and Kitchen, Mehrauli

Emilie, Aseem, Manu & Shamshad Husain at Visual Art Gallery, IHC

Niladri Paul's diary launch at IHC, New Delhi

Mrinmoy Barua with the Ambassador of Cuba and Sumeet Chopra

Dance Performance by Sidigomas at Epi Center, Gurgaon



Mrs. & Mr. Muzafar Ali & Amitaba Kant at LKA

M.K. Tripathy, Arijoy, Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Sanjib Sen & Umesh Verma at Epi Center, Gurgaon

Sumeet Chopra & Kritika at Pragati Maidan

Sujata Chaudhry

A page from the diary

Date: 24th October 2005

My mother died yesterday
at 10.30PM. She was 73.
A mother of four and grandmother
of eight, she welcomed death
on my brother's lap last night.
Doctors said it was a
painless diabetic heart attack.

Till the end she was active
even though her legs were numb,
hands trembled, eyes semibiind,
with diabetic cataract, burning
sensation all over her body
and needle marks on her wrinkled skin
signalling total dependence on
insulin pricks for survival.

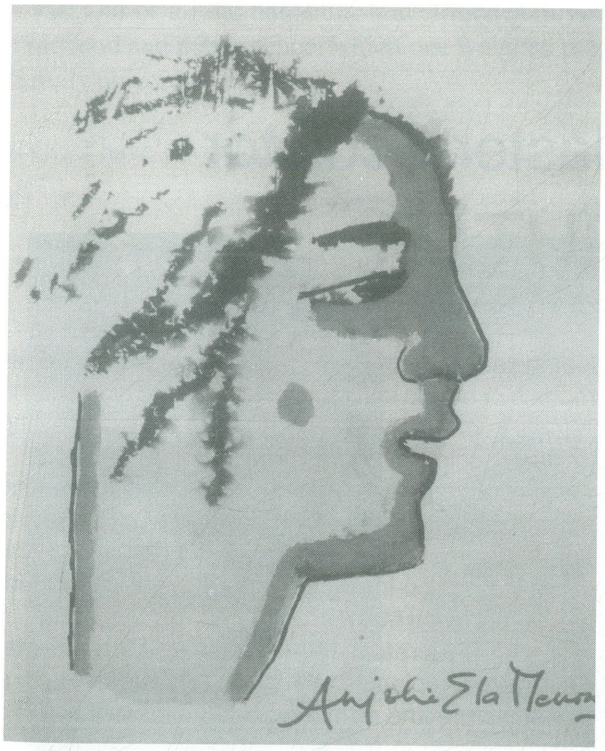
Many scenes from my life
flashed since last night,
and ended with the scene
on 10th October 2005, a Monday morning
preceded by a sleepless, disturbing night.
Hurriedly I ate the curd rice,
she had prepared, putting all her love
for me and departed for the
airport to catch the f ight to Delhi.
I was in a pensive mood
and too busy in my thoughts
to bid a proper 'goodbye', not realising
that it would be our last meeting.
Destiny always wins they say
and death arrives at the door silently.
My mother never asked for roses,
she prayed God for the best roses
for her children. Like a mango tree
she was firmly grounded and
gave us fruits, flowers, leaves,
and sheltered us from the rain
and scorching rays of the sun.
She weaved the magic of
south Indian delicacies and
did puja day and night for our welfare.

She was an ocean of simplicity,
patience, sacrifice and understanding.
She was the eternal light house,
she was the bank, where I
deposited all my hurts and worries.
Like a tortoise nourishing her children,
by just looking at them,

my mother's loving glance,
gave me confidence and security.
During the two months stay in
the Christian Medical College hospital
in Veiore, her comforting and quiet
presence made me forget my pain and
come out of thej'aws of death.

Like the moon on the night sky,
she made my world 'special' just
by being in it. She was the first
love of my life, on whose lap
I saw my first dream. She
taught me the fundamentals of life
and made me what I am today.
I now realise the word 'mother'
contained so many things,
I never got to say. I now know
how much love my mother
had for me, how her heart broke,
each time 1 shed a tear.
She was not a woman,
she was my mother.
She was not human,
she was my God. in this
extraordinary world, she was the
most-ordinary person, I ever met.

In a world of plurals and plenty
'mother' is always a singular entity.
We have plenty of dew drops to welcome
the morning sun, plenty of stars
to play with the moon, plenty of flowers
to beautify the garden, plenty
of rainbows to make the children happy,
plenty of Gods and Goddesses
to bless the devotees, plenty of brothers,
sisters, cousins and friends to'
interact, on this crowded planet,
but only one mother to grace
my universe and give me life.
She can take the place of all
others but her place no one else
can take, A fountain of pure and
deathless love, my mother
Gadi Anuradha Murthy, came
into this world on 28th November, 1932
and departed on 23rd October, 2005. ■



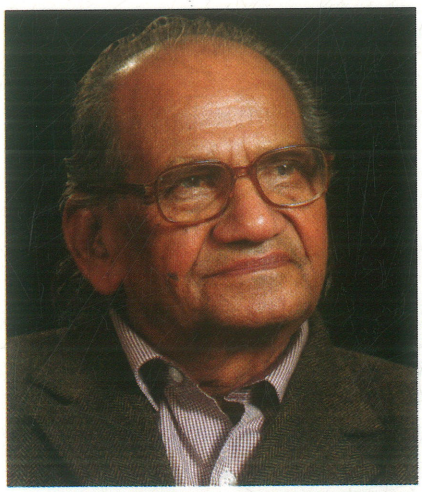
Anjoli Ela Menon, Portrait of a poet, Ink & Acrylic on Paper , 11"x14", Courtesy: Gallery Sara Arakkal

An eminent Oriya poet Sujata Chaudhry also writes poems in English and to her credit has authored six volumes of poetry. She is a senior officer with the Govt. of India.

INTERVIEW

Vincent Van Ross

An Interview of Master Sculptor
RAM V SUTAR



Ram V Sutar

At 85, the lean bespectacled figure of Ram Vanji Sutar stands tall in his studio among the models of heroic sculptures he has created over the last 63 years. With tools in one hand, he goes about his job of giving finishing touches to a clay sculpture he has been working on lately.

Active and agile as ever, Ram Sutar hardly looks 85 and his stamina is something that is worth emulating. The long hours of work he puts in to complete the sculptures is proof enough of his devotion to the vocation he chose in 1947. It is a strange co-incidence that his creative freedom began the same year as India won freedom.

Ram Sutar presented a retrospective of his "Monumental Sculptures" earlier this year to coincide with his 85th birthday. He is a living legend of Indian sculpture and an institution unto himself.

We bring you an illuminating interview of Ram V Sutar with our Editor, Vincent Van Ross, on this occasion.

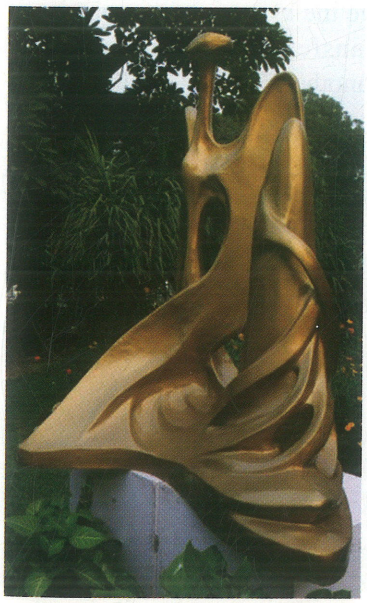
Vincent Van Ross (VVR): Do you remember a single instance from your childhood that turned you towards art?

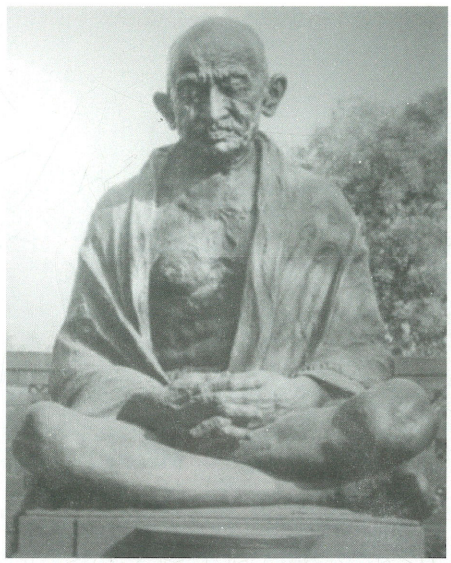
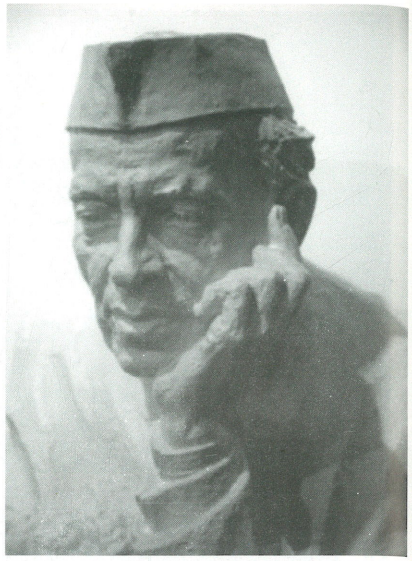
Ram V Sutar (RVS): As a child I used to draw on the ground. Then, I used to make outlines of shadows of my friends falling on the wall. I cannot remember any single incident which turned me towards art. I think it was something that was there in me ever since my birth. I think it was in my blood.

VVR: Out of all the hardships and struggles in your childhood and adolescence, which one weighed most heavily on you?

RVS: I have never looked at hardships as hardships. I have always taken it as part of life. I have always believed that if you are sincere...if you are hard-working…if you are honest, things will work out for you. When you make an honest effort…when you put in all you have got…to do something, you sow the seeds of success. Success may not be immediate but it will come in due course of time. It is only a matter of time.

When I came to Delhi, I learnt that there was a proposal to install a statue of Sardar Patel in Delhi. I approached the people responsible for this project. When I got there, I was told that the project had already been assigned to a sculptor from Bombay. But, when there was another proposal to commission a statue of Gobind Ballabh Pant, they remembered me and they



approached me. That taught me this important fact of life.

VVR: What is your success quotient?
RVS: It may not go with modern thought. But, I still believe that if you are determined and if you are willing to work hard with utmost sincerity, you will achieve your goals.

Let me narrate an instance from my life. When I was a schoolboy, I planned to visit a Sugar Mill far away to see how it works. I got a few of my friends to accompany me.

We set off one fine morning. By evening we hadn't reached even half the distance and we had only food for one day and no money. In the evening we found ourselves outside a village home. We met the occupants and told them about our mission. They let us stay the night, served breakfast and packed lunch for all of us.

We set off on our journey again. By next evening we had still not reached the Mill. So, we decided to request the owner of the nearest house and they were kind enough to host us for the night. The next morning they too fed us breakfast and packed lunch for us. We reached the Mill next afternoon.

As we neared the Sugar Mill, I sat down to make a sketch of the mill. A car stopped near me. A gentleman stepped out from the car and looked curiously at what I was doing. He was bowled over when he saw my drawing. He turned out to be the owner of the Sugar Mill. He wanted to know who we were and what we were doing there. When we informed, him of our mission, He quickly herded us into his car and took us on a tour of his Mill. That was a great learning experience.

VVR: You are endowed with remarkable skills as a painter-artist. What made you focus on sculpture?

RVS: The skills required for a sculptor are no different from that of a painter. In fact each one is an extension of the other. If you can create distance in a painting…if you can create dimensions in your painting, you have the blueprint for sculpture. You only need to transfer it onto another surface. Sculpture is just another medium.

I made drawings and paintings until 1960. But, coming from a carpenter family, I had a natural talent for sculpture. At the end of the day, what a carpenter produces is a wooden sculpture!

VVR: What was your first achievement as a sculptor?

RVS: I made an image of Lord Ganesha without any photo reference for my teacher when I was a school boy. That sculpture drew so much of appreciation from my teacher that it brought tears of joy into my eyes.

VVR: Any childhood dream that has remained unfulfilled?

RVS: I wanted to make a heroic sculpture of Lord Hanuman tearing his chest to expose life-size images of Lord Rama and Sita Mata. But, these are expensive projects which need sponsorship or commissioning.

VVR: Could you please explain "Heroic Sculpture" for our readers?

RVS: Yes. Any sculpture which is larger than life-size is called a heroic sculpture.

VVR: What do you think is the height of your achievement?

RVS: 45 ft—that is the height of my achievement. At this height, the Chambal Monument is the tallest sculpture I have created so far. It is located near the Gandhi Sagar Dam in Madhya Pradesh. The sculpture depicts a lady flanked by two boys. The lady represents the Chambal river and the two boys represent the brotherhood of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan—the two states that share her river waters.

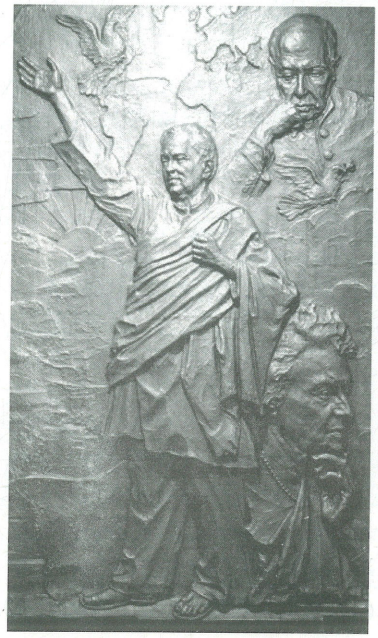
There are some unique features associated with this monument. The amount approved for this 45 ft high sculpture was just Rs.10,000. It did not even cover the cost of raw material for the sculpture. Determined not to let this opportunity pass, I took it as a challenge.

When I saw the contractor bringing huge quantities of cement and concrete, an idea flashed in my mind and I thought I had the answer to the budget barrier. With his help, I created a huge 45 ft high concrete block. Then, I chiseled the whole sculpture single-handedly.

It took me 15 months of hard work and I completed the monument in 1961. When I looked up at the 45 ft high sculpture I had just completed, it sent a thrill through my spine because I managed to complete this huge sculpture in the face of such heavy odds.

VVR: There was a proposal for a 50 ft high monument for Bakra Nangal Dam that could not be commissioned due to paucity of funds. If it had been approved, that would have been your tallest sculpture. How did you feel when the project did not come through?

RVS: I have never felt disappointed or depressed in my life. The project didn't come to me. But, I prepared a maquette to go with my proposal. At least, it gave me an opportunity to design a new sculpture. I felt happy about it.



VVR: What is the biggest project under your cap so far?

RVS: The Krishana Arjun Monument installed at Brahma Sarovar, Kurukshetra, Haryana in 2008. The sculpture depicts an important scene from Mahabharata. It shows Lord Krishna's discourse of Bhagwat Gita to Veer Arjun in the battlefield of Kurukshetra on a chariot drawn by four horses. At 60 ft in length, 30 ft in width and 35 ft in height, this is probably the largest bronze sculpture in the world. The scale of the sculpture is two times larger than life-size.

VVR: One person you admire most?

RVS: Mahatma Gandhi...the messenger of peace. When I am asked to make a sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi, I feel privileged. I have created more sculptures of Mahatma Gandhi than on any other theme. The sculptures of Mahatma Gandhi created by me have been presented to Heads of State from many countries by our political leaders and dignitaries.

VVR: Since you are so obsessed with Mahatma Gandhi, would you like to share your reaction when you learnt that your sculpture of Mahatma Gandhi was going to be installed at the Indian Parliament?

RVS: I was elated. I was overjoyed. I was overcome by emotions that one of my sculptures of Mahatma Gandhi had found a befitting place for installation.

VVR: Have you visited any foreign country. Did you get an opportunity to view their artistic works? What kind of impression did they make on you?
RVS: I visited the USA when my son Anil was there. Then I visited Italy, Mauritius and China. In the US, I got an opportunity to visit Mount Rushmore where the faces of US presidents have been chiseled on huge rocks. My stay in Italy took me to the great works of Michelangelo. I was humbled by this experience.

In Mauritius, I collected a lot of corals from the seashore and worked on them to create small sculptures. In China, I could not see much as it was a very short visit.

VVR: How did you feel when you came to know that the President of India had decided to confer the Padmashree Award on you in 1999?

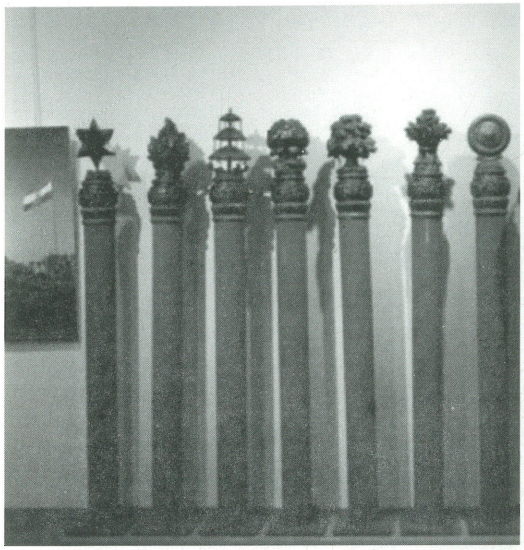
RVS: I was overwhelmed. I felt honoured. I felt happy that my work was being recognized by the Indian Government.

VVR: What in your opinion is the matter of greatest pride for you?
RVS: I am proud to be an Indian.

VVR: Your work is primarily realistic in nature. But, you have also done some abstracts. What is your take on abstracts?

RVS: The hallmark of realistic work is perfection. There is a grammar for realistic art. Logically speaking, one has to master realistic art before attempting abstract work. One must master forms, colours and compositions before breaking out of them. One must learn the rules before deciding to

45 Ft. height Chambal monument



break them. So, is the case with Art.

VVR: You have over 200 sculptures under your wings. You have created marvelous realistic works and fantastic abstract works. In the last 63 years you have had a marathon run as a sculptor. You have probably created more sculptures than any other sculptor of fame—living or dead. How satisfied are you with your achievements?

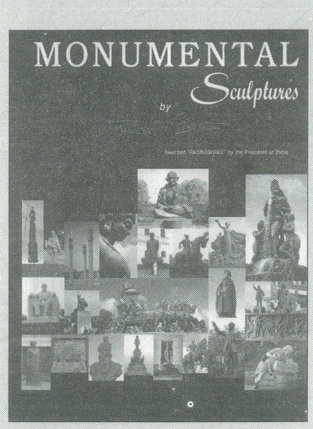
RVS: Very satisfied. I have always been a contented man. But, that does not mean that you don't aim higher. That does not mean that you do not want to grow. You set a target for yourself. You achieve it. Then you set a higher target and then you achieve it. Then you set an even higher target and achieve it. Life goes on like that.

You have to grow, grow and keep on growing. That is what life is all about. The moment you stop, you begin to stagnate. That is not good for a human being. My greatest wish in life is to constantly strive to grow.

BOOK REVIEW

Monumental Sculptures

by Ram V Sutar



"Monumental Sculptures" is a 126 page glossy book which catalogues and scripts the sculptural journey of one of the greatest sculptors of India- Padmashree Ram V. Sutar.

The book profiles Ram Sutar and goes on to list important milestones in his life and describes his struggle on the way.

This book provides a year-wise list of over 200 sculptures created by the sculptor since 1947 along with illustrations in colour and black and white as also stories and snippets related to these sculptures which makes it a visual treat and readable at the same time. Replicas of most of these sculptures were displayed at a recent retrospective exhibition of the sculptor at Lalit Kala Akademi,

Monumental Sculptures concludes with concepts for three dream projects of the octogenarian sculptor Ram V Sutar. These are proposed projects which the sculptor would like to complete during his lifetime. The book is scripted by the sculptor himself.

On the whole, the book is well laid out and presented. At Rs.600/- it is worth a buy for budding sculptors and anyone who has anything to do with serious Indian art.

so long as I live.

VVR: Very good! So, what further heights have you set for yourself to scale?

RVS: Well, I want to create at least two sculptures taller than the Statue of Liberty in the USA—one realistic and one abstract. For the realistic sculpture, I have evolved a concept revolving around Mahatma Gandhi called "Peace on Earth." And, for the abstract one, I have the idea of a "Progress" monument in mind. The blueprints for both the concepts are ready.

VVR: That is very nice, Sir. It was a pleasure talking to you. I feel privileged and enlightened to have spent so much time with you. I offer my best wishes to you and I hope you get an offer to execute your dream projects in the near future...■

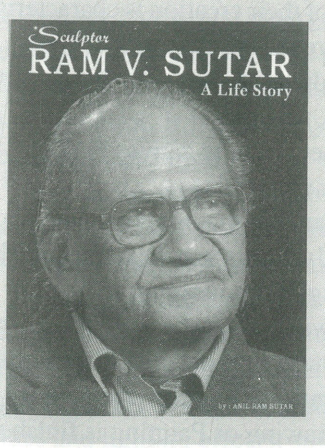
Photos : Vincent Van Ross

Vincent Van Ross is a cultural and political commentator and editor. He is also a renowned photographer.

BOOK REVIEW

Sculptor Ram V. Sutar- A Life Story

by Anil Sutar



The coffee-table book entitled "Sculptor Ram V. Sutar-A Life Story" is a companion volume to Monumental Scuptures by Ram V. Sutar. This 232 page biography of Ram Sutar has been penned by his only son Anil Ram Sutar in a very simple and lucid style.

Being part of the family, Anil Sutar was a witness to many an incident narrated in the book. At more places than one, I felt that this is an autobiography of Ram Sutar written by Anil Sutar!

This biography delves deeply into the childhood, adolescence and the life thereafter of one of the greatest sculptors India has produced-Ram Vanji Sutar. It offers interesting insights into his grooming and details the incidents which helped shape and mould the personality of this great sculptor. It transports us right into sculptural journey of Ram Sutar and provides graphic details of the evolution of Ram Sutar as a sculptor.

In writing this book, Anil Sutar has done a great service to the artist community by shedding light on and sharing minute details of Ram Sutar's life. Ram Sutar's life is full of interesting incidents which can inspire and encourage budding sculptors to take on the challenge and march ahead towards their goals.

The book is priced at Rs.1,200/- and I think it is an affordable price for such an excellent book.

S.S. Bhatti, Cockfight, Poster Colour

ESSAY

Dr S.S. Bhatti

COMPUTER PAINTING

A New Mode of Artistic Creation

When paint is applied to canvas, paper, or other materials in producing a work of Art, the process as well as the product is called Painting. Drawing, which constitutes the basic structure of Painting, is usually absorbed in the finished work itself. As an autonomous work of Art a Drawing is a graphic representation by lines of an object or an idea. In other words, when the surface area of canvas or paper is largely covered by paint the work is Painting. But when it is predominantly linear in character it produces a Drawing.

In conventional modes of Painting, oil paints or watercolours or poster (i.e. opaque) colours are used, and the paints are applied, among other things, with a variety of brushes or with a painting-knife. Drawings are produced with pencils, crayons or pen(s) and inks. The process or the act of their creation is characterised by the following features:-

- Usually the painter/draughtsman uses his hands in Drawing and Painting,
- He is in direct contact with the canvas or paper, his tools, paints, and other materials,
- He is working on a surface that is actual not virtual,
- He can conveniently figure out how the finished object that he is aiming at is emerging,
- He can hold the work-in-process at the correct viewing distance to make appraisal of distortions or mistakes or shortcomings so that they could be rectified before the Drawing or Painting is finished,

• If the surface is rough-textured, he can turn it around in correct lighting conditions to view how it is progressing, and

• He has the all-important advantage to mix colours to create exact tonal values to suit the theme and subject-matter as he has visualised it in its finished form.

• Computer Painting stands in sharp contradistinction to the process, materials, tools, and techniques of Conventional Painting. The Artist, using this fascinating electronic mode, is faced with umpteen problems and inconveniences such as can be fully appreciated and grasped only when one is a practising Artist himself. I have done about 2,000 works in the conventional mode of Drawing and Painting, and 300 in Computer Painting. Based on this rich personal experience, combined with my 20-year-long forays into the very different, but allied, field of Art Criticism, I can well identify and enunciate the salient points of similarity and contrast that I have encountered in Computer Painting. These are enumerated below:-

• Although the Artist uses his hands yet he is not in direct contact with the surface on which he is drawing or painting. Nor is he holding his tools, or paints, or other materials in his hands,

• And he is missing the unique joy that he experiences when he draws or paints with his hands directly on the paper or canvas,

• The screen of the computer monitor is his virtual paper or canvas,

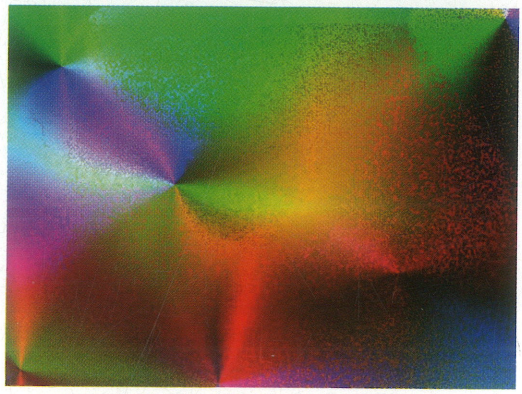
• His only real tool is the "mouse" which, unlike a brush or a pencil, does not lend itself to easy manouvring-a skill that is indispensable in creating varied effects of tonal values. The brushes and pencils and paints are virtual tools which he merely sees rather than uses,

• It is not possible to correctly visualise how the finished artefact would emerge because such product would be known only after the print is taken out. There is a problem of scale in what the Computer Artist sees on the monitor. It is relatively different in size from the ultimate end-product,

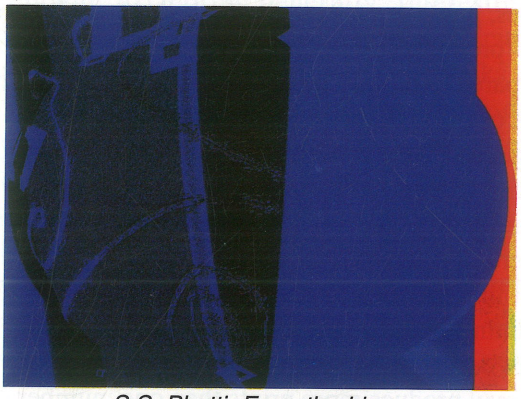
• There is no way in which he can mix paints or change tonal values on the monitor, for such facility does not exist in the standard software of the computer,

• The same is the case with variations of textures. The monitor shows only virtual not actual textures. Texture being the surface quality of the canvas or the paper is a great aid to the creation of richness in tonal values and lighting effects, and

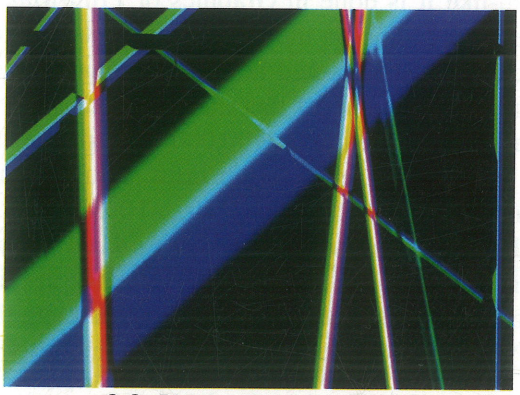
S.S. Bhatti, Energy in search of expression (Computer Painting)



S.S. Bhatti, Play of light is colour (Computer Painting)



S.S. Bhatti, Form the blue (Computer Painting)



S.S. Bhatti, Rejoicing Fields (Computer Painting)

S.S. Bhatti, Goddess Durga, Mixed Media

S.S. Bhatti, Anjali, Oil Pastel

• In a restricted sense, Computer Painting is akin to Graphics or the Art of Print-Making. In both the cases, prints are taken out after what may be called the "prototype" image [not the work] has been finally prepared. And this process entails the use more or less of mechanical equipment in either case.

Arguably, in the conventional method of Painting, the Artist cannot easily prepare another work of Art exactly like the one he had originally created. Therefore, this one work is, indeed, a prized one. But the same may be true in the case of Computer Painting if the Artist takes out only one print and then destroys the "prototype" image. Alternatively, he may produce more prints than one, number each one of them and then authenticate them by signing them-like it is done in Graphics or Print-Making. Then, depending on the number of prints, the total price of the work could be divided equally among them. For example, if there are 10 prints, and the total price is fixed at Rs 100,000, each print would be sold at Rs 10,000. Each print should then be numbered: 1/10, 2/10, 3/10,...10/10, and for authentication affixed with the artist's dated signature on it. In the case of a single print, it should be inscribed "Solo Original" and signed by the Artist with date. Of course, to do so, in all intellectual integrity and occupational honesty, would be part of the professional ethics that the Graphic Artist and the Computer Painter must themselves lay down, respect, and practise for the honour and glory of their unique Art-Forms. It is pertinent to point out that, when the Artist is well established, it is his signature, not so much his work, which actually sells. According to a popular belief, this, indeed, was the oft-expressed lament of the great Pablo Picasso on the tragic commerce of Modern Art. He used to say that people buy my signature not my work!

And, finally, I would like to dispose of a wide-spread patent, if irrational, objection that Computer Painting is relatively much easier than Conventional Painting. Since I have produced numerous works in both modes, I can vouch that such a notion is far from the truth, if not downright silly. What one gains in terms of speed, mechanical precision, quick reproduction, fanciful variations of colour-scheme, etc. with the aid of computer, one hopelessly loses by way of creative freedom that is best encountered and exercised only when one is using one's hands directly in gay abandon inherent in the conventional mode of Painting. The springiness of the canvas, in response to the sensual touch of brush-work, the varied pressure on the brushes to modulate tonal values,

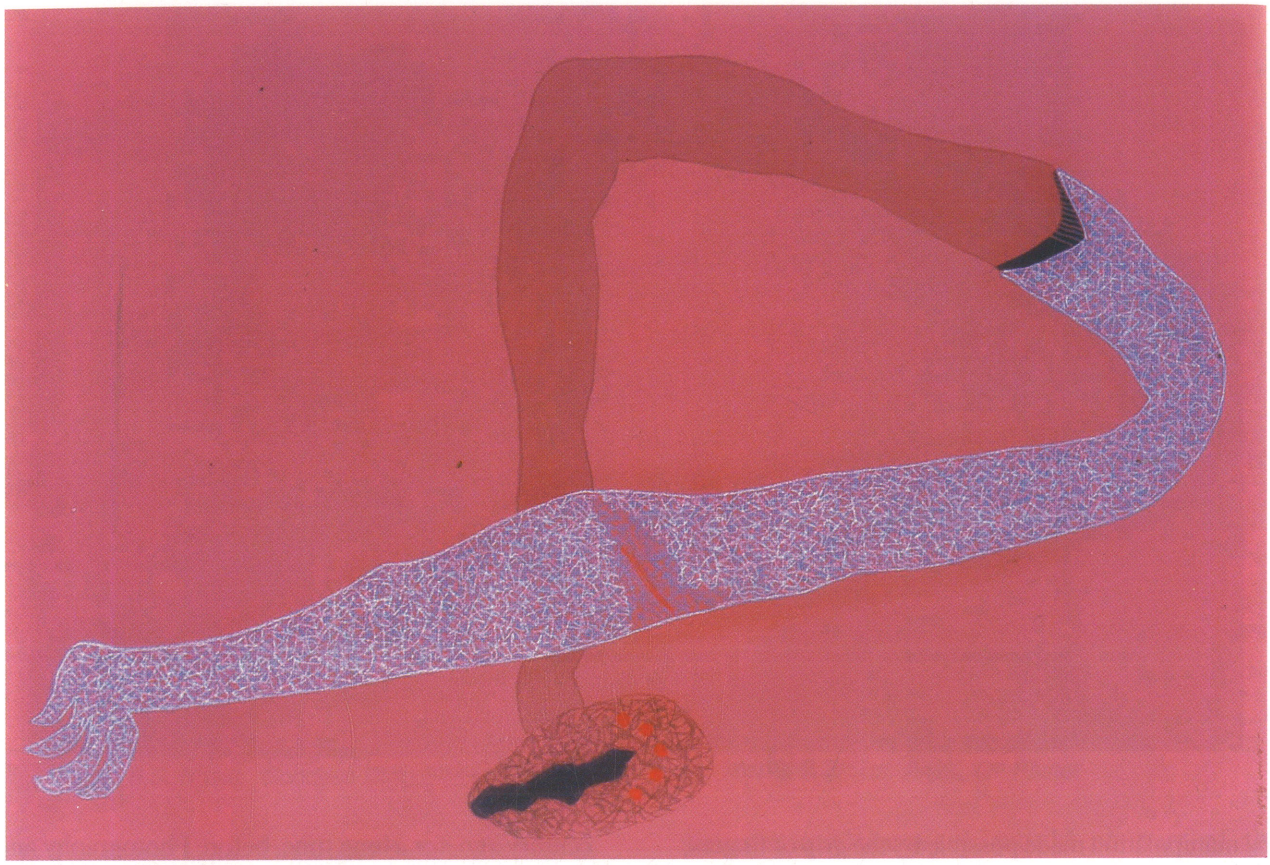
S.S. Bhatti, Light House, Water Colour

the manipulation made possible by the grip of fingers, the lusty movement of the wrist, and the mudra-like sway of the arm together produce a creative joy not unlike sexual pleasure. This is exactly what sustains the Artist in his crusading belligerence that he unconsciously deploys to demolish the outdated and to create the novel, according as his sensibility dictates and his heart validates.

Simple though the act of creating a work of Art may seem, especially when you watch someone do it like an expert in your presence, it is well nigh impossible to copy another Artist's Computer Painting or his Painting when he is working in the conventional mode. In this curious, but sacrosanct, sense, Computer Painting is exactly like Conventional Painting! At any rate, the purpose of this exposition is to stress the moot point that Computer Painting is legitimately A New Mode of Artistic Creation brought into existence by the worldwide revolution in the field of Electronics and Technology. It will take quite some time for the viewers, artists, art lovers, art critics, and the general public alike before they could ungrudgingly accept it as a familiar artistic activity.

I vividly remember that I had to consistently write, in my capacity as the official Art Critic of The Tribune, a leading English newspaper of the north-western region of India, in a similar strain a quarter-century ago, for a long time, before Photography and Graphics [i.e., Print-Making] became established as acceptable Art-Forms generally. Interestingly, nowadays, when such shows are held in the city, or elsewhere in the region, nobody ever looks at a photograph or a print with disfavour or disdain! Everyone seems to believe that they are different forms of Artistic Creation, valid and valuable, in their own right. Only their materials, mediums, tools, and techniques are different, in the same way as our dresses are different from the ones our forefathers wore.■

Dr. S.S. Bhatti is a writer, poet, art critic, architect and artist. He is the Ex-Principal of Chandigarh College of Architecture and lives in Chandigarh.

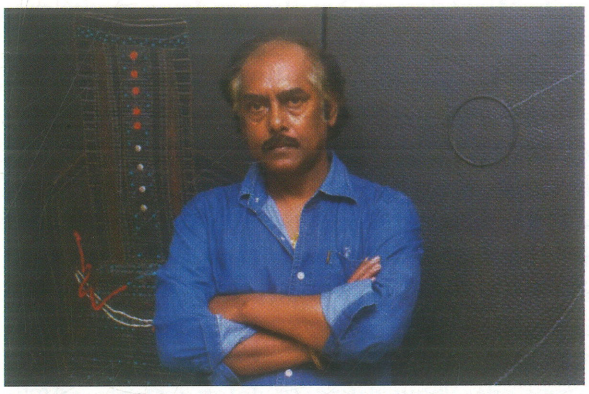


PROFILE

Mithun Pramanik

SAMIR AICH

Living on the surface, we often mask our concern to pose a picture of serenity, wellness and happiness, yet at the end of the day, it is just musk. Aich's paintings try to explore the hidden feelings that aren't always easy to express and his art defines a somewhat unreal space that is wholly uncluttered.



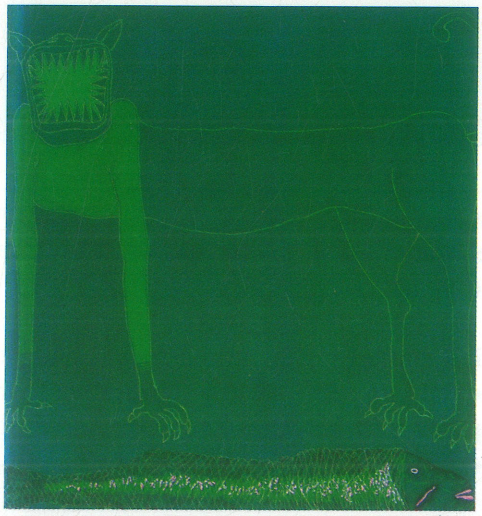
Samir Aich

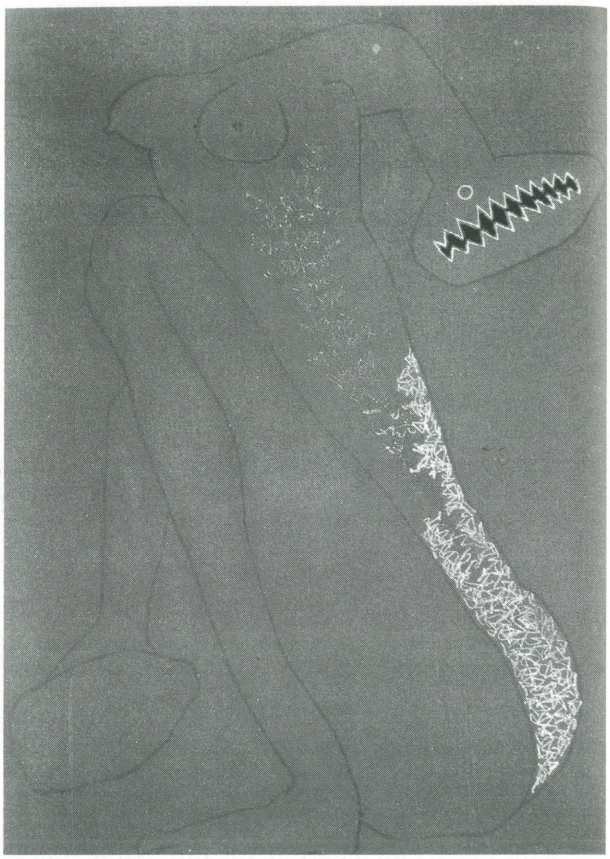
Samir Aich (b. 1956) is from Bengal Art school genre, and has been painting almost for three decades now. Though he participated in many group and solo shows, 1987 happened to be a defending year, when his work really gained widespread reorganization. He graduated from the Government

College of Art and Craft, Kolkata in 1978. He had been through turbulent time when he was in his early teens. Falsely branded as a naxalite, he and many young men like him were subjected to treats, torment and misery. That was when he tasted uncooked violence. The turmoil and chaos, the rollercoaster insecurity that chequered the life of the impressionable boy would, not surprisingly, speak out in his art.

As one could observe, Samir Aich's flow of creative energy was incredible. He could have been a footballer, singer or a theater actor, but he was destined to become a painter. He started painting inspired by his father. In 1973, when he was 16, he joined art collage in Kolkata. Five years later he had trained himself as a commercial artist and set up his own advertising agency. His interest in fine arts drove him to experiment and innovate through his paintings. Deeply influenced by music and poetry, he looks for a lyrical expression in his works. In fact, the artist believes that in order to a good painter one needs to explore other form of arts. Being an artist he later tried his hand at designing a theater set for a play on the inimitable Ramkinkar Baij. And he also does pavilion designing and Durga effigies along with pendels décor. He has worked as an art director with eminent filmmakers like Goutam Ghose and Bratya Basu and he started making a documentary film on his guru Paritosh Sen but the film is not completed yet. He is creative and always in an experimental mood and his forms on view gave the impression of an artist having fun with material. His mode of expression constantly changes and new directions are perpetually sought, but, like a renaissance artist, a central humanistic concern guides him throughout.

Two qualities make artist Samir Aich stand apart from contemporaries. The first is his love for all things that conveys a sense of power, a quality that pervades his work. The second is his artistic language, which thrives on his constant urge for experimentation. What strikes me most in Samir Aich during my interview is his urge for ceaseless experimentation and innovation to arrive at a personalized language of painting that speaks of value. And his efforts never appeared to me as phony. According to him doing paintings or selling them isn't a business "My painting is not for





decoration. The owner has to study them over the year."

Aich started out as a neo-realist and gradually moved into semi -abstract figurative themes and ties his rope between figuration and abstraction. He has changed his approach to painting, since the turn of the last century; he has been constantly experimenting with new pictorial concepts and ideas. These naturalistic figurative representations were presented with touches of imagination and emotion. It is both sentimental and powerful; expressionistic and minimalistic. Although Aich's paintings are forceful, his 'expression' is reflective. It is this state of experience - of constant flux within a still mass, which engages the viewer's attention. His current body of work is moving towards a simplification – a clearing away towards an economical depiction. His paintings are visually sparse with little surfacing or interior delineation. Samir Aich believes that an artist's environment influences his work, thus, Aich's canvasses reflect the dissonance of urban life. Yet, it is not a discontented discord.

The treatment of space is apparent in Aich's works as rich textures surface of his canvas are traversed by single, unending line. He creates eternal space through is paintings. In fact critics have remarked that 'humans float through his works in gay abandon'. His canvas play hide-and-seek with the viewer as a figure emerges from behind semi-transparent layers of colour. It is rare to see such a smooth combination of figurative and abstract work. However, Aich is in favor of breaking down the formal definition of these two disciplines in painting. He has sought to 'figurate' abstract concepts such as the primordial force of Nature.

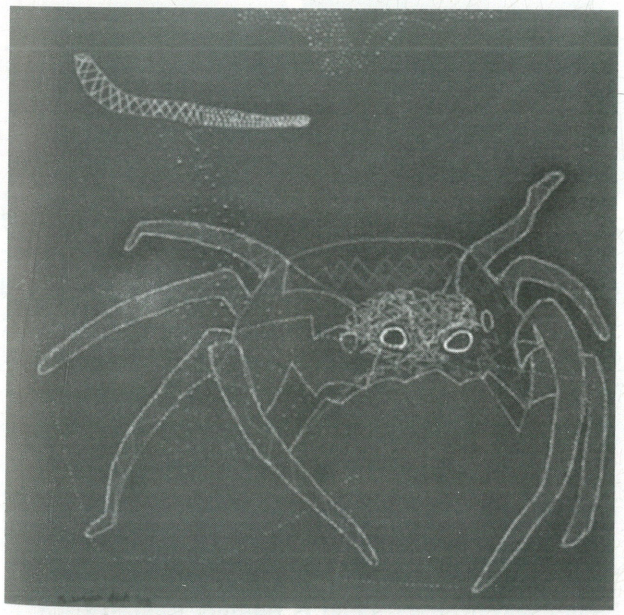
When Samir Aich chooses to face up to reality in his works, the results are invariable very depressing. His series called *Bubbles* or earlier in other centers with *Chaos and Order, The Voyage* and *Glow in the Gloom,* the impression was that of the artist who has impulsively inclined

towards dark images – the anger expression itself is no uncertain term. This renders the image as a vehicle of his romantic self expression and invests it with a metaphorical meaning. His paintings give a statement on the toil and turmoil in the eternal human odyssey to and across the unknown. The other part of the oeuvre is in his extraordinarily sensitive inflection of tints and shades. After having reduced his colour to no more than a scale of values, he pursues tonal painting with fervour and discipline valourizing the activities of his mind, evaluating, weighing and balancing the relative strengths of all that it encounters in its search for order and the unresolved complexities. The erased areas between them have taken on a new resonance that pushes us to the figurative markers. The paintings work best when the salient elements are all held in tension on the same plane, with no element appearing to overlap or underline any other. This gives the paintings that quality of a world whose contents might be said to be suspended in a simultaneous presentness of being.

Considering his entire work, one is never surprised to encounter works distinct in individual character and presentation, and yet they maintain his unique mark as a painter. The turmoil in his own life - the decay, destruction of the society and the drifting conflict has shaped his art and all this invades his canvas again and again. Through his work he tries to assimilate his experience. A critical reading of Aich's paintings, drawings, sculpture or fiberglass installation however might lead one to define them being as symbolically expressionistic - a faithful devotion to expressionistic.

Besides being socially conscious, he feels it is also necessary for an artist to retain his interest in humanity. That's why with Jogen Chowdhury and Suvabrasanna he founded "Silpi Astha" to help the artists. Apart from that he has been involved in various cultural and political movements since his collage days. Gallery Ensign (New Delhi) very recently organized his solo exhibition at its premise. ■

Mithun Pramanik is a young, dyanamic art critic, curator and writer based in Kolkata.



Rajesh Singh

Some recent sculptures and installations by DHARMENDRA RATHORE

The recent series of sculptures and installations by Dharmendra Rathore consists of many interesting facets. Throughout his career he was known strictly as a painter and had developed his signature style that had high decorative value. The recent movement toward experimental art is certainly a major change in his personal oeuvre. It is this change and some noteworthy aspects of the change that this article seeks to outline. I shall choose a few of the recent sculpture-installations for discussion here. These works were displayed in a solo show called Transit Lotus curated by Johny M.L. in March this year.

Nirguna-Purusa. This work is very large in size (9.5x 7x 4.5). Cast and sculpted as a fiberglass sculpture, it looks very glossy due to being painted with being played, sounds of water, birds, and some popular mantras. Simultaneously with the sounds, correlating scripts were being formed merged together and descend over the body of the central figure. Over the head of the figure, there was being projected the video of the image of a famous public icons.

Dharmendra Rathore

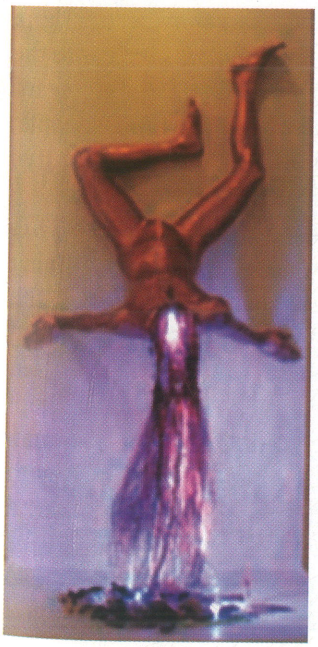
When Nations Speak. This installation consists of 203 goat heads kept on a red carpet. Made again of fiberglass, the heads were installed on the gallery floor. They were arranged in rows and columns making a pattern. The heads too were painted in metallic color: golden, silver, red, brown, blue, white, grey, etc. indicating the differences of political status of different countries as also the different geographical situations. The work is a crowd of heads. The heads are not all the same; they are not made out of a single mould; they were individually sculpted and molded having particular physiognomy and appeal. Each head is unique. Each carries the

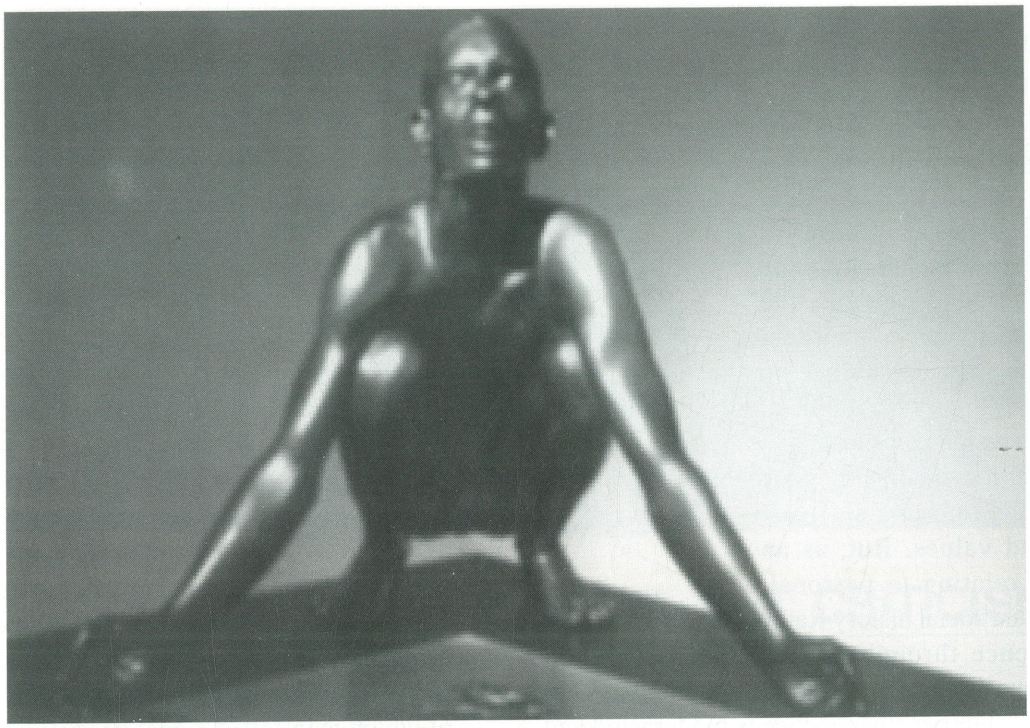
flag of a country on the forehead.

The work has mainly two layers of meaning. In the hometown of the artist in Rajasthan, there still prevails a custom of goat sacrifice during religious festivals and marriages. Belonging to the traditional family of the rulers and warriors, the artist's hometown has a custom of goat slaughter or sacrifice on specific occasions wherein social dignitaries would participate; the custom is fast dying in most parts of India due to changing social orders and values. But, as an anecdote relating to personal, regional, and social history Rathore decided to make the reference through the goat heads. Animal slaughtering is done globally in various ways. In developed countries, the practice is modernized and has a certain sanitized context attached to it, whereas in rural India, still the olden ways are traditionally prevailing.

The flags on the goat heads make the trajectory between the local and the global. The works makes an ultimate reference to the dwindling animal population of certain species threatening the delicate eco-system. The man and animal or man and nature relationship is at stake in the wake of modernity; the planet earth has been usurped by the humans who are wiping the other species out of their natural habitat, which would eventually have serious adverse implication on the human condition. Woefully, all nations are part and parcel of this campaign against the planet earth.

Pujya Pitaji. This installation consists of a wall-mounted component and a set of other components kept on a table on the floor. The wall-mounted component is neither strictly a painting nor a sculpture, yet it is both at the same time. The wall-mounted piece hangs from the ceiling. Inside an attractive and large frame is a beautifully painted makhmal in the centre of which is installed a goat head. From the neck of the goat head dangle strings of pearl necklaces. It is as if paying reverence to a departed soul; the component exhibits the resemblance of our living room portrait figure on the wall, which ordinarily shows a revered personality. The component kept on the table below is very funny, and is intentionally so, since it depicts a set of five microphones attached to the microphone stands, as on a dais of speakers. But what is startling is the fact that instead of the





actual microphones there are fixed the goat heads, all painted white. The entire work is a comment and mockery of the slogans in the name of human and animal right activists, and periodical statements made by politicians that ultimately results in naught. The crime of dolphins or whale slaughters, for instance, continues unabated.

Severe Gestures Trying to Grow from the Bodies of Egoists-I. The installation has two components. On one end of the floor, there was placed a large-size fiberglass crocodile, and on the other end, exactly opposite was placed the crawling figure of a man. Some precious jewelry dangle from the jaws wide open, while a larger part of the jewelry is seen on the floor as if the crocodile is throwing up the jewelry. On discussion I learnt from Rathore that the work is a kind of parable. Crocodiles have the tendency to throw up the unwanted things after devouring its prey. They would throw up precious jewelry after devouring a heavily ornamented male or female. These items are ultimately useless in the larger cycle of life and cosmos. Nothing would go from here after we are no more. Everything will remain on the earth even while our bodies are no more. Still however we are glued to such items of worldly possessions and forget the actual aim of life. The man on the opposite who mimics crawling wants to adopt the same level of detachment from the worldly things.

Severe Gestures Trying to Grow from the Bodies of Egoists-II. It is a set of five figures. The number five is symbolic of references of panca-tatva (five elements) panca-paramesvar, and the five fingers. The figures are standing in circles with different hand gestures (mudras) some of them being very explicit today. One of the figures is obese. They in general look without specific identity; like commoners on the streets, today's middle class youth. The lack of attribution of any specific identity to these images imposes a meaning to the installation—most of us are only stereotypical characters searching in vain for identity. The modern youth is clueless to the purpose of existence, to the way leading toward salvation or happiness. In a country of a billion people, most of the human are born accidentally and live sub-human lives, often displaced and deprived.

Dining with Genome Project. This installation consists of two major components, a dining table with eatables, and a man crouched over the table with hands wide open, and the face held upwards. Actual dining table is used here that is often found in plush residential homes. On the table is kept some vegetables that are colored mauve. The man is almost nude, made of fiberglass, and painted with metallic dark peach. The man is like a laborer, a landless farmer, and a worker with little means of survival, with little resources, who struggles for bread and butter. The installation is a comment on class

conflict, the gulf between the have's and have-nots. The vegetables in India are quite unsafe these days with growing genetic engineering and unsafe use of pesticides. These are deadly and toxic vegetables. The man is yet struggling to gather them in the hands and pondering over his fate.

Pink. This work hung upside down from a wall. It is a fiberglass human figure that has no head. It is cut off from the neck. From the neck comes out several strands of digital wire that are like pathways leading the man's intelligence and communication channel to different fixed directions. Each strand of wire is of a different color and type. On the table kept exactly below the head, there are a number of cosmetic items arranged so as to metaphorically comment upon the growing trend of cosmetic surgery and artificial body decorations.

Paintings. We must also mention the series of works such as The Fourth Generation, Beautiful Body, Self-service, Madonna, Hey Guys What's Up, Rocking Horn, etc. This entire series of works address contemporary issues and realities. The series marks a departure from Rathore's earlier works of two decades. In the series, there is no vain decoration, no lofty spiritualism, and no glossy aesthetics. These works do not relate to religion, nature, and tradition any more. They relate rather to the contemporary realities, the popular culture, and the westernized urban male. It is about the fractured identity that the Indian metro-sexual is conditioned to live in. Not only the themes, but also the palette, the technique, and the visual strategies are aligned to the mainstream discourses of the international and contemporary Indian art. The works utilize impressions from the digital art and digital technology. Multiple plains co-exist within the same body-contour. The inter-play between realism, idealism, and technologically generated visual impressions run through the entire series of paintings.

In conclusion, we might add, Rathore has taken a bold step to nearly renounce his earlier forte for the sake of joining the mainstream contemporary art practice.■

Rajesh Singh is a critic, art historian and writer.

Two heads in a landscape, Oil on canvas, 22"x33", 1976

ART REVIEW

R.S. Yadav

THE F.N. SOUZA SHOW

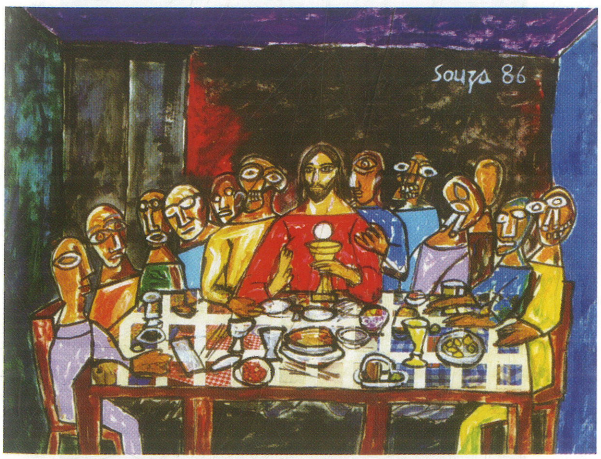
It was a mega art-event when Dhoomimal Gallery, New Delhi mounted recently an F.N. Souza Show at the Lalit Kala Galleries. It was also a Souza retrospective in a sense - though the works exhibited were those collected by the Dhoomimal Gallery over a long period (when Souza used to visit them regularly). The works, spread in four galleries of Lalit Kala Akademi, Rabindra Bhawan, were a sumptuous feast from Souza for the Capital's art-lovers. Several of the artist's approaches and aspects were discernible in this show. There were theme based works like the "Last Supper", there were individual works that related back to Picasso - the two nosed heads, particularly. Then there were typical Souza landscapes with their linear characteristics.

There were works that stressed feminine sexuality. And there were some sharp drawings and painted-on photos of comely damsels that made for the audience's unflagging interest in Souza's creativity. The-day long show also included a documentary on Souza and his gallery connection. By all accounts Souza has been a controversial artist (and he really enjoyed controversies about himself and his works). This writer himself has got into a controversy with him, years back, at the Dhoomimal Gallery. We hotly differed in our views. But he was that good hearted that he not only respected my views (decided to give them some thought) and readily offered to draw a sketch of me (which he did spontaneously) which I still possess and have not put it in the art market in spite of some pressure. Of course Souza's most lovable works are those that display his drawing acumen (his drawings are the most prized ones in the art market). I had seen a

Woman bathing boy, Oil on Board, 30"x24", 1949

Portrait of Uma & Ravi Jain, Oil on Canvas, 36"x36", 1982

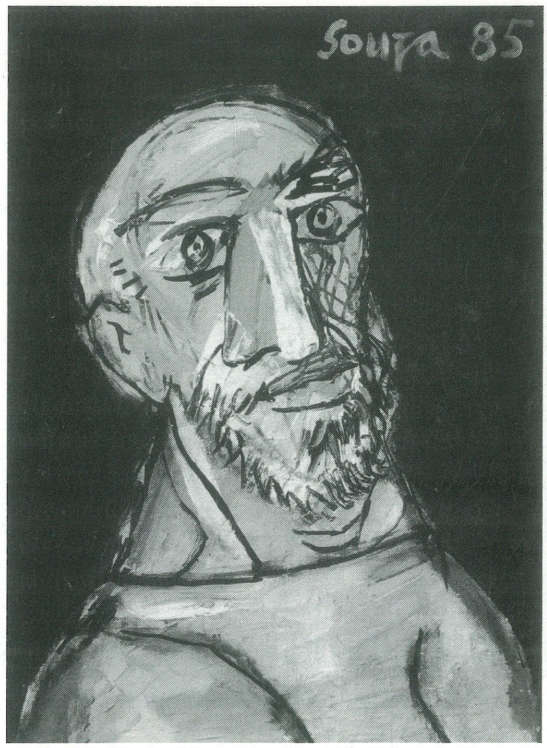
large and very valuable collection of Souza's early works (the Alkazi Collection) at the Arpana Gallery, Institutional Area, near the Games Village). These were mostly figurative works and did not show so much of Picasso influence. There was also good use of colour in these works (later on Souza minimized use of colour such as we see in his linear landscapes). The Dhoomimal Collection (and he was quite attached to Ravi Jain and the Dhoomimal Gallery run by him) consists largely of his later works that parallel with his acquaintance with the late Ravi Jain. A portraiture of the young couple, Ravi Jain and Uma Jain, still stays in Uma Jain's house and has been printed on the cover of the Book that Dhoomimal



The last supper, Oil on Paper, 38"x50", 1986

Gallery had brought out on the eve of the Souza Retrospective edited by art-critic Vinod Bhardwaj and a foreword by Krishna Khanna, who while in Bombay, was a witness to the growth of the Progressive Group movement that ushered in new though westernized imageries, away from the current romantic trend that had enlisted such historical names as Jamini Rai, Nandlal Bose etc. who had focused on Samthal tribals, the Indian middle class (Bhadra Lok) and the regional folk traditions that in Bengal began with the Patuas, the mythological story-telling wall hangings, created by local artisans that hung around the Kalighat temple (the Kalighat from which Calcutta derived its nomenclature under the East India Company, who couldn't pronounce Kalighata in the local way).

The Progressive Group, with such early modernists as H.A. Gade, M.F. Husain, Souza, Ara etc. built up the modernist movement which laid a solid foundation for modernist art in India. Krishan Khanna's account of the movement and its moving lights has captured the scene so well, in the book "Francis Newton Souza", which was released at the inauguration of the Souza retrospective. Both the book and the retrospective has helped not only a timely appreciation of the veteran artist's life and work but also told the art world as to where the original exist at the moment (Souza buyers can check with the book if they are buying a fake or a genuine



Untitled, Oil on Paper, 23"x17", 1985

artwork).

Coming back to the works that were displayed at the Souza retrospective, mounted by the Dhoomimal Gallery at the Rabindra Bhavan Galleries, New Delhi (under an excellent curation by Mrs. Dalmia) with very informative tags besides each of the successive sections, categorized by the curator. The book and the works in the show clearly tell us from where Souza took off and moved from a realistic approach to a more abstract, thematic creations that clearly show us the growth and the spread of the artist and his creativity. The book (its documents) also clearly show how well and intimately connected Souza was in the art world (contemporaries celebrities and all).

Souza's pen-and-ink drawings are a fascinating fare for every art-lover. Mostly untitled one could see in the Dhoomimal Catalouging his delineations from 1943, 52, 65, 66, 73 and so on. In the chapter wise division of the book we find a chapter "Souza in the Forties" with a huge portfolio of very engaging drawings, still life, landscapes and water colours. Some chemical alterations on paper and a Picassoisk head, which is sumptuous viewing.

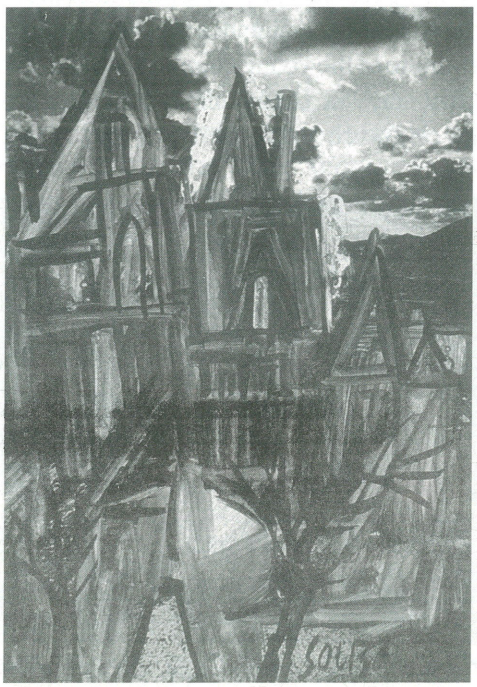
Then we come to Souza in the fifties. This section contains some of his very powerful drawings - a true hallmark of Souza, some oils (on paper) that harp back to European tradition. Some oils-on-board and a fine nude in water colour. "Souza in the Sixties" carries some aggressive female nudes (oil on paper) more radiant landscapes, drawings and portraits a still life or two. The female dominates this section too (in both alluring as well as aggressive modes).

"Souza in the seventies" too has a distinct flavour and an expose of more aggressive/ dynamic Souza line. There are quite a large number of heads, a few still life works and some very endearing drawings.

"Souza in the Nineties" has very voluptuous large-breasted women in both drawings as well as paintings. A wonderful work "Night Ascension into Heaven", some still life works, quite a few female portraits and landscapes and "The Last Supper".

"Souza in the Nineties" offers some wonderful landscapes, more mysterious heads, more Kamasutra and some very fine feminine drawings. Thus there is an informative chapter - "Works of Souza acquired from Dhoomimal Gallery by private collectors. This could inform the secondary art market as to where to find a genuine Souza. Thus the book "Francis Newton Souza" and the Souza retrospective (post-mortem) complemented each other.■

R.S. Yadav is a Delhi based senior art critic, poet and writer.



Untitled, Chemical Ulterations on Paper, 10"x7", 1969

Vinod Bhardwaj

THE DEER-HUNT BY WOMEN

(On seeing an old Miniature of Awadh)

What did you say?
Women also hunt
They go to jungles deep and dense
With bows in their delicate hands
And guns with deadly aims

It was a picture
with five women in it
hunting deer
in a glowing lush-green forest
beautifully dressed
wearing lovely headgears

Foot wears of exquisite designs
Adorned their feet
But look at those daring deer
Gamboling, drunk with joy,
Their leaps catching a new glow
Of the green grass

Look at that belle in a pink dress
Talking to the other damsel
But the deer are unaware
Of her sinister intentions
And her fatal gun
One of them has leaped in the air
The second has caught a green
shimmer on her face

The third perhaps is singing softly
There are five women in the jungle
Maybe that assures the deer
The Maharaja with his twisted moustaches
Is nowhere to be seen
Nor his elephants, hunters and lackeys
To have ruffled the whole jungle
This is a different kind of day

The bright is of a different hue
Today it is women who are out to hunt
Are they queens?
Must be the queens
And their maids and their friends
Looking at the grand landscape
Unblinking through their guns
Could they really be women-hunters?
Possibly some painter did this picture
To please the Nabob
Or it could be real
Who can say with confidence
But sir, why then doubt?
Women too are known for brave deeds
In the bloody history of mankind
Rare instances are known
Of learned, beautiful and brave women
Whatever they do
They do it with charm and finesse

But the deer think otherwise
In this unique moment they have become like poets
Trusting that women will hunt like women
With a deft delicacy and grace
And confidently
They take a magnificent, very high
And perhaps their last leap in the air ! ■

Translated from Hindi
by –Kunwar Narain

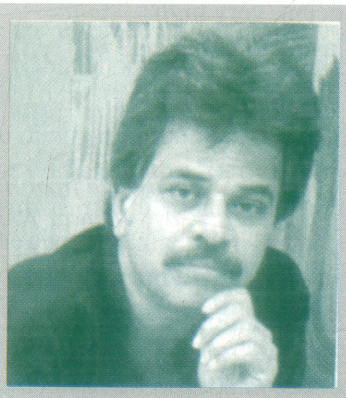
Poet, critic and art curator Vinod Bhardwaj has published two collections of poems. In addition he has published serveral books on art and cinema.

TRIBUTE

Vincent Van Ross

SUBRATA KUNDU

Tribute to an Innovative Artist

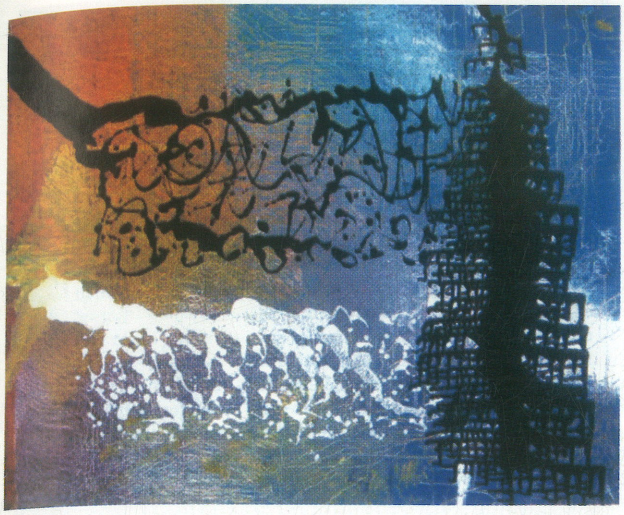


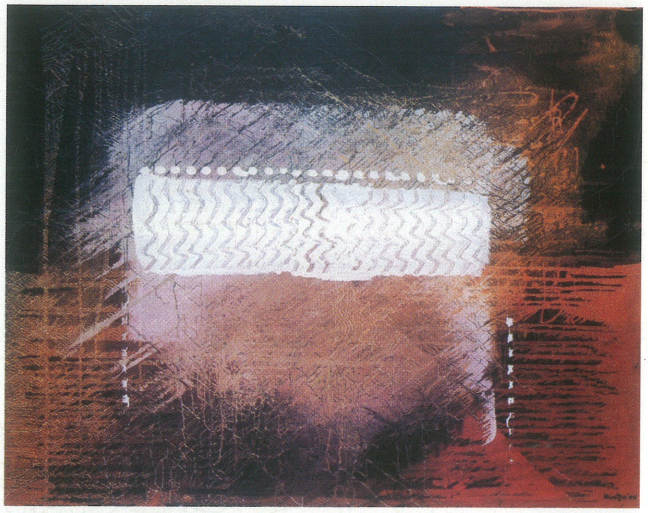
Late Subrata Kundu

The last time I saw Subrata Kundu was at the Lalit Kala Akademi a few years ago where he held a solo exhibition of his latest abstracts. The diminutive figure of Subrata in his longish hair (which almost looked like a bob-cut) and moustache dressed in a mustard coloured kurta and chudidar was jubilant and in high spirits.

Born in Ranaghat near Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1959, Subrata Kundu came from a very humble background. His early life was full of struggle and strife.

Subrata received his formal training in visual





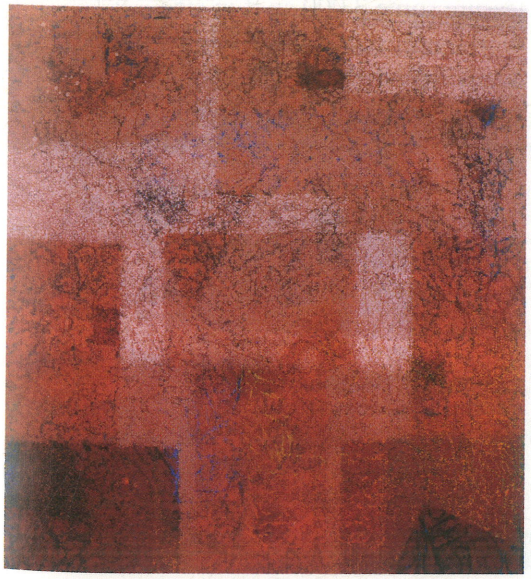
art from the Government College of Art & Craft in Kolkata. He graduated from the Government College in 1983. He was closely associated with Principal of the Government College, Prof. Dipali Bhattacharya, whom he treated as his mentor.

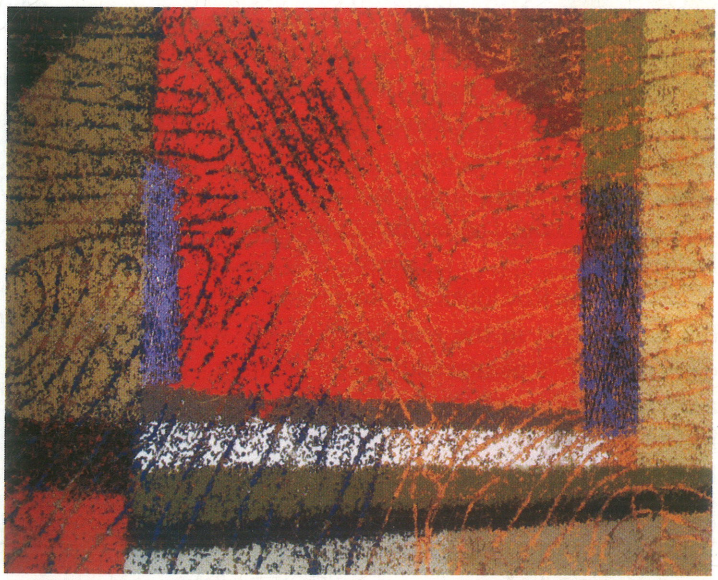
Prof. Dipali Bhattacharya rates him as a brilliant student. She says his watercolours were bright and vibrant. He also experimented with Acrylic colours while he was a student there though it was not a popular medium at that time.

After graduating from Kolkata, Subrata arrived in Delhi for his masters in Fine Art from the College of Art in Delhi. He trained under Prof O.P. Sharma and Prof. Niren Sengupta among others, for his MFA.

While Subrata pursued his masters in Delhi, Prof. Niren Sengupta was the principal of the College of Art who found him to be an excellent student. Prof. Sengupta remembers that Subrata was faced with a language problem when he came to Delhi. He had difficulty with English as well as Hindi. But, he always managed to get himself across. Incidentally, Subrata's wife Nupur was also a student of Prof. Niren Sengupta. And, he has words of praise for both of them.

A senior colleague, Sanjay Bhattacharya whom Subrata treated as an elder brother had a weakness for watercolours. Sanjay confesses that he was impressed with the watercolours of three students at the Government College of Art and Crafts in Kolkata who were junior to him. These were Subrata Kundu, Aparoop Banerjee and Pralay Kundu.





Sanjay Bhattacharya was particularly appreciative of Subrata's early watercolours depicting mountains and sea beaches. Subrata's Ladakh series is another hot favourite with Sanjay. What impressed Sanjay most is Subrata's control over the treatment of layers and tonal divisions. Another interesting aspect of Subrata's oil paintings is that he used something called a patthi instead of palette knife to apply bold patches of oil colours.

"Finally, Subrata abandoned figurative forms to explore abstract art," explains Sanjay Bhattacharya. "There too he was able to play around with textures and create visual appeal."

Another Delhi-based senior artist and Subrata's senior student at the Government College, Sudip Roy, feels that Subrata had a drive in him and he took to Acrylic the way a duck takes to water and created many interesting paintings. Among others, Subrata also trained under the renowned artist Ganesh Haloi.

Sudip Roy looks at Subrata not just as a painter but as an artist in the real sense of the word. He explains that "a painter will go on painting. But, an artist will evolve a style of his own. In case of Subrata, he not only evolved an individualistic style but also kept on experimenting and improvising his style. That is why he was a real artist." Undoubtedly, Subrata was a compulsive innovator.

Out of all the artists who came to Delhi from Calcutta, Subrata was way ahead of others remarks Sudip Roy. He was a master of colours. His brush strokes had his distinct signature. His splash of colours had a magical effect on the eyes of the viewers.

Out of all his passions, Subrata's love for murals was remarkable because he took space and scale as a challenge. He has over 20 remarkable pieces of expansive murals in Delhi, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad, Chandigarh, Srinagar and Mumbai to his credit. The largest of them all are two murals in Lajpat Nagar, Delhi and Power Grid Corporation, Gurgaon which measure some 3,000 sq ft in size.

One mural that many Delhites might have noticed was created by Subrata for Dak Bhawan, GPO, Parliament Street, New Delhi. Prof. Niren Sengupta and Sudip Roy are distraught that this beautiful mural has since been destroyed due to government apathy.

Recalling Subrata's show at the Birla Academy, Prof. Dipali remembers that his entire show was sold out. Every art collector in Kolkata possesses some work(s) of Subrata Kundu. His works have found buyers and art collectors not only in Kolkata but also in other parts of our country.

Prof. Niren Sengupta remembers Subrata's show at Dhoomi Mal Gallery in Delhi which was a great success. He has held at least 15 solo shows

and participated in numerous group shows.

Subrata attended several workshops all over India and traveled widely in India and abroad. He shared his knowledge of art with his students and has been responsible for laying the foundation for many an upcoming artist.

For his works, Subrata Kundu won many accolades which include awards from Indian Society of Oriental Art, the West Bengal State Academy and the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society.

Subrata himself summed up his evolution as an artist in these words: "I cannot clearly recall when the crooked lines of my unsteady hand of childhood took graceful and stately forms; or when my liking for lines and colours turned into my love and passion for art. Very soon my world of art came to be dominated by geometric shapes, the permutation combination of these shapes till the newly formed patterns came alive and began to express new things with each passing day. My passion for art introduced me to the fascinating world of great artists. Each acquaintance ushered in rays of knowledge."

The unique style of Subrata exemplifies a post-modern approach. Through his works, he gave vent to his fears and frustration emanating from compulsions of modernity. He sought to give expression to urban problems such as overcrowding and erosion of human values which stirred his conscience.

The mixed media creations of Subrata including "Concrete Jungle," "Trapped," "Extinct," etc. tread a non-figurative path. Here lines and other geometric forms are used to create thought-provoking images.

Not many know that Subrata was proficient in multimedia graphics and he was also a web designer. He combined his artistic skills with digital knowledge to turn out unique websites. He was also associated with an advertising agency.

Subrata held Prof. Dipali in great reverence and he was constantly in touch with her. In fact, when he decided to marry Nupur, he went to Prof. Dipali along with his would-be-in-laws for her blessings.

Over the years, Subrata got so engrossed with his works and his personal activities that he was often overworked. That left very little time for his family. Prof. Dipali feels that it would have been better for everyone if he could have spent a little more time with his family.

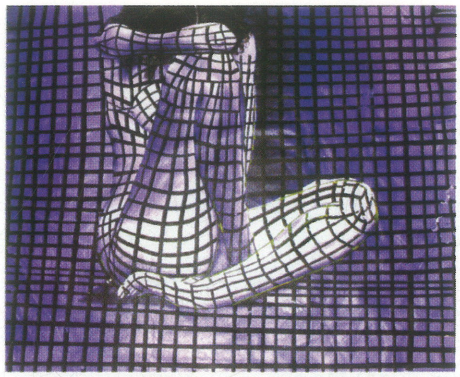
In April 2008, there was a mishap and Subrata Kundu's life was never the same again. None of his close friends and associates I spoke to has been able to give me a clear picture of what happened after that. In spite of my best efforts I failed to establish contact with another close friend of Subrata-Shamshad Hussein who is on a foreign trip. But, most of them agree that he went into depression and then he was taken ill. After a prolonged illness, Subrata Kundu passed away in Kolkata.

During his last days, the goddess of wealth had turned her back on him. For a man who lived lavishly in his heydays, it was a sad end. His relatives, friends, acquaintances, admirers and fans in Kolkata gathered at the Government College of Art and Crafts to offer their tributes and condolences at his demise.

Of all the people I contacted, Prof. Dipali seemed most moved and hurt by Subrata's departure. "I was not just a teacher or a good friend but like a blood relation to him," confides Prof. Dipali. She was sad that the life of a promising artist had been cut short by the cruel hands of time. She concluded her conversation by beseeching to God that Subrata Kundu should be reborn as an artist to complete the works he has left unfinished in this world. ■

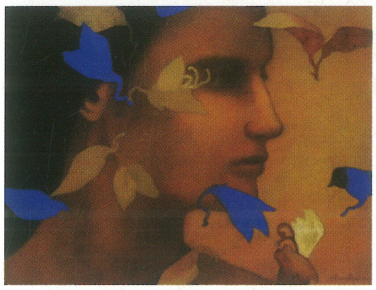
Vincent Van Ross is a cultural and political commentator and editor. He is also a renowned photographer.

Ashim Chkraborty

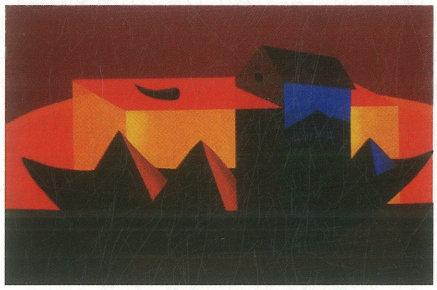


Gauhar Malhotra

Jayshri Burman



Chandra Bhattacharya



Babu Eshwar Prasad

Baba Anand

ART MART

SECOND EPICENTRE ART MART

The millennium city Gurgaon witnessed some exciting art activities spread over three days from 10th to 12th September 2010. The second Epicentre Art Mart was held at apparel house, Sector - 44 and visitors were surrounded by a range of high quality original works of art by artists across diverse backgrounds. It seemed the reasonably priced artworks were aimed to make out affordable and accessible to public/collectors with variable pockets and tastes. Art mart provided an opportunity to interact with galleries, consultants and artists on a single platform.

The fair was opened on 10th September with a unique show of performance art by the Black Sufis of Gujrat - the Sidigomas. All exhibition stalls and the associated events were housed within the hall and surrounding courtyards at Epicentre. Some of the special highlights of Art Mart included

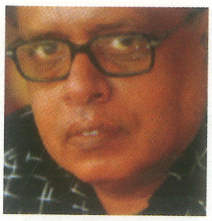
Bikram Sen

Sachindranath Jha

Paresh Maity

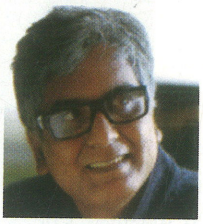
Sushma Bahl

Seema Bawa


Vinod Bhardwaj

Parul D Mukherjee

Nupur Kundu


Sudip Roy

Kavita Nayar

Sanjay Bhattacharyya

'Millennium City: Through Yours Lens,' a community initiative to capture the spirit of Gurgaon and a 'Sculpture Courtyard' featuring art installation themed around a range of playful art including works of Anjolie Ela Menon, Arpana Caur, Dhruva Mistry, Paresh Maity and K.S. Radhakrishnan amongst other.

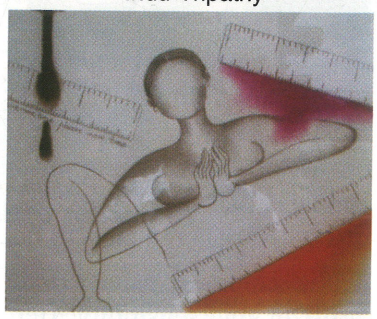
Art from Africa featured paintings by artists from Tanzania and Kenya brought in by renowned artist and author Muzu Sulemanji from Dar Es Salaam. Few other interesting events included 'Art Appreciation Course' for art collectors, Draw & Paint workshop, 'Snap it up' photography workshop, 'Face 2 Face' for buyer and artists, 'on the Spot Competition' for children, 'Art & Cinema' screenings, 'Art Camp' for artists and a panel discussion on 'Appreciating & Collecting Art – Pleasures & Perils for interested collectors.

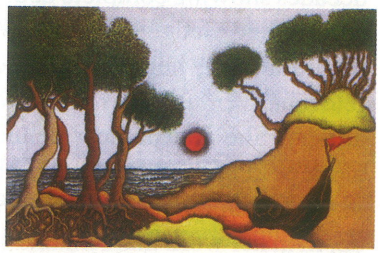
Irrespective of rain, the Art Mart could bring together around 200 emerging and well known artists, consultants, experts to interact with each other and with public and media. It was a beautiful opportunity to appreciate and buy for the connoisseurs of art. ■

- CMT

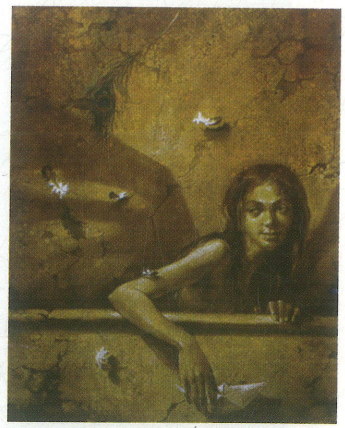
Rekha Bajpai

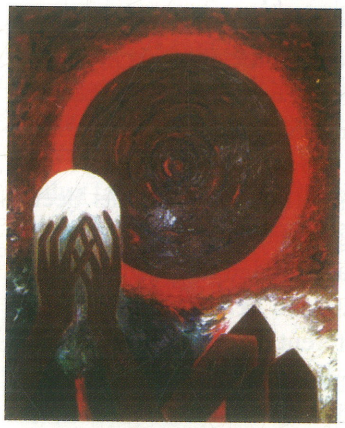
Indu Tripathy

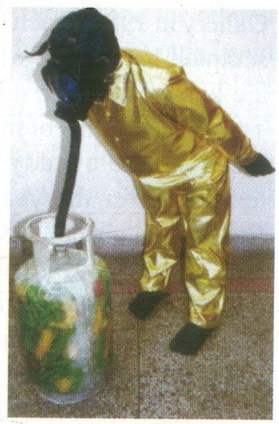

Arpana Caur


Prakash Karmakar

Kishore Chakraborty


Sanatan Dinda


Veer Munshi


Rajesh Ram

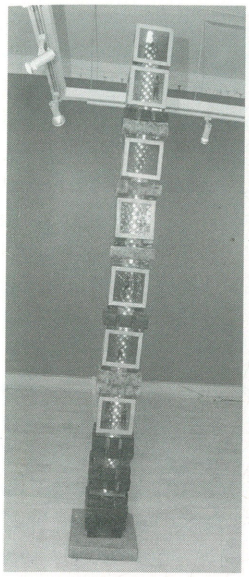
Santanu Ganguly

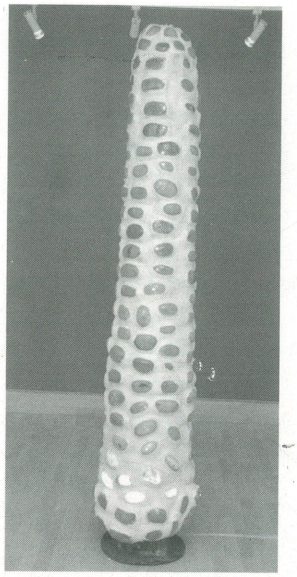
HEMI BAWA

Hemi Bawa receiving Padmashree Award from the President of India

Glass sculptor & painter Hemi Bawa is an evolved artist of fine sensibility. Her work span over for decades showing complete dedication to her art. She is an acknowledged sculptor who understands her medium well, her works have a unique modem relevant even as they remain works of unflinching artistry. She is a pioneer in India and has worked alone & long over the years to chart un-trodden path in glass sculptures. Hemi has achieved a remarkable depth in her work that remains unsurpassed in India. Born in 1948, she studied at the Triveni Kala Sangam since 1969. Her first show happened at Shridharani Gallery in 1980. A pensive, multi-facedted artist and sculptor, her works, whether on canvas or in form, are known for their strength & visual significance. Through interplay of material, colour and shape, her creations are a study in balancing harmony and tension. Over the years, Hemi' s work has been figurative, conceptual, geometric and architectural.

Hemi Bawa is an acknowledged sculptor who understands her thoughts and her medium so well that she sculpts with different materials. Apart from cast glass, she combines glass with aluminum, copper, stone and steel in her quest to find the perfect reply to the echo in her soul. While Hemi's sculptures have involved different material to match the timbre of the thought that inspires the creation, she has carved a niche for herself in glass. Glass is challenging, the inherent contradictions intrigue her. Her works have a unique modem relevance even as they remain works of unflinching artistry. She uses glass in varying degrees and differently to give a transparent opaque effect, creating wonderful hues in unorthodox form, From photo transfers on glass, embedding of copper before firing, cutouts of metal figures in glass she has mastered them all to convey just the emotion that she wishes to. The uncluttered forms are an extension of her structured personality and concentrate on line, form and space. Whether in sculpture or on canvas, Hemi says more through less. Hemi's sculptures are a part of her consciousness. They are all intrinsically linked, the creative outpourings of a thinking artist, and as Hemi syas, "One piece evolves into another, each having some relation to the earlier one."





Her work was included in various annual shows from 1987- 1990 in All India Fine Arts and Craft Socioety. Hemi Bawa had her first individual exhibition of paintings at Sridharani Gallery at Triveni in 1990. In 1991 she was felicitated The Prime Minister of India for her contribution to social service in the field of art. Her work was displayed at the annual Sahitya Kala Show in 199 1-93, she had her Solo Show of paintings at the prestigious Jehangir Art Gallery in 1992. The Mandarin in Hong Kong organized an exclusive exhibition of her paintings in 1993 and also she had a special show of her Sculptures in Ceramic and Glass in Delhi. In 1994 she exhibited her contemporary garden sculptures, entitled "Form and Spirit" in Delhi. Hemi Bawa held an exhibition of her cast glass sculptures at Jehangir Art Gallery, Mumbai and Sridharani Gallery in Delhi in 1996, her work is also in the collection of National Gallery of Modem Art.Hemi Bawa was commissioned by Coca Cola to make a sculpture for the Olympic Games. The Eight feet high Coke sculpture is in the Coke museum at Atlanta in 1996, 1997 Installation glass, 'Fourth dimension' at the Colonnade - Delhi, she had a Solo Show in Cast Glass Sculptures in Art Today Delhi in 1998. 'Frozen Fire' another Solo Show in cast glass sculptures held in London in 1999. In the year 2000 she participated in Sculpture 2000 in Connecticut as a representative of India. also represented India in Sculpture Garden of Tuscany, Italy in 2001, she Installed a 18 Feet High Sculpture at " The Park Hotel" Chennai in 2002 and she Received The Habitat Arts Commendation for the Best Artists Show 2002 at the India Habitat Centre. She had Mixed media show at the Hotel Hyatt, Delhi in 2004. In 2005 she had Cast glass show at the Park Hotel Delhi, Glass and paintings solo show in Tokyo at the Genkan Gallery, her Glass work is in the Serina Hotel in Kabul, Afghanisthan, her sculpture is in the collection of the Coming Museum of Glass in The USA. She had Solo show titled- inspired by steel at Alliance François De Delhi in 2006 and Participated in Khushi Auction. In 2007 Hemi Bawa had her solo show of sculptures and paintings in Chennai.

Hemi use to travel almost everyday from her posh Halley Road bungalow to her workshop in an industrial area at Faridabad. "The workshop have to be in industrial area, because it's not just like any artist's studio, for the glass sculpture one need continuous electricity and the farness and the related set-up can be done only in industrial area only" said the veteran artist. The artist believes in complete balance between life and work, as she make a point to spent a quality with her grandchildren as well as other family member. Hemi Bawa has been awarded the prestigious Padmasree from the President of India, for her remarkable contribution in the field of art and sculpture. ■

Santanu Ganguly is a Delhi based writer. He writes on art and culture.

Kavita Nayar, Acrylic on canvas, 36"x48", Coutesy : Flowery Fantasies

SHORT STORY

Moushumi Kandali

ETERNAL

I have a confession to make. A strange obsession lurks in the shadowy depths of my mind. An obsession about women's breasts. Although a woman myself, an aged one at that; to minutely caress a woman's body with my glances just like a man has become my habit. Whenever I catch sight of a woman, I first observe in detail the size and shape of her breasts. The virgins stand out with a defiant thrust. Oh what an innocently beautiful posture! Pregnant women remind me of ripe juicy wood apples. A mature swollen wood apple. And the wrinkled hanging breasts of old women? Like two long leather bags creased by age... Breasts are metaphors. Yes they are. They whisper the truth to you. That the defiance of youth is ground down to meek submission by the harsh hand of reality. Unbearable - this harsh, final truth of life!

Once on an excursion to the capital with some research students we visited a famous museum. A series of sculptures were displayed in tall glass cases in a long hall. The students roamed around in a trance, looking at the breathtaking sculptures from various corners of the world. Just then my eyes were drawn to the statue of a women displayed in one corner of the hall. A Stark figurine of pendulous breasts, pregnant belly, swollen in the middle like a top. Imtiaz the curator said that was Wilendorf Venus. "It's very old ma'am. About eighteen to twenty five thousand BCE. Gazing at it, I was in a shock. At what moment of rare understanding was that statue sculpted out? The hands that carved this naked truth on stone, deep down, did they also have the same obsession as I?

How did this strange obsession come to grip me? I try to grasp and I trail back to my childhood. Closing my eyes I see- a mass of images, slow and brittle like a

snail walking across. At the slightest of chance they arrive sailing upstream on the raft of my memories. Actually they roam about everywhere, in the dark corners of my conscious, down in the bottomless gutters of my being, these images wander about. And something grips me - a strange urge to fondle women's breasts with my eyes ...

The spic and span premises of the most affluent and powerful joint family in the village on the banks of Nakhanda were my childhood home. It was a Brahmin family of seven brothers, their wives and children. The house honeycombed with tiny cubicles. The courtyard was packed with trees, the cowshed with cattle. A few women shuttled to and fro attending to the household affairs. The women were my mother, aunts, grandmother. The women folk of my family had an uncanny resemblance to the statue of Wilendorf Venus. Pendulous breasts, fat pregnant bellies and downcast eyes. Throughout the year, one or another would retire to a particular room. And then a scream would be heard from the room! The woman would emerge from the dark damp clammy room cradling a child. Pink, slimy, like a sparrow drenched in rain. The baby would suckle at the swollen breast with utter concentration. After a short respite the woman would again metamorphose to Wilendorf Venus. This process was an inseparable and intimate experience of my childhood. Though the women with their obese, run down bodies were my closest relations; seeing them tend to their teeming children, cooking delicious meals of meat and fish garnished with spices bamboo shoots etc. and moaning aloud in midst of such activities filled me with a indescribable feeling of uneasiness. Words cannot express my feelings. Seeing their private lives enclosed in a narrow confined circle filled me with trepidation. Oh! Is my future also meant to be confined to this narrow circle? The thought sent shivers down my spine. Amongst those women only towards Subhadra did I feel a sense of closeness. She was different from the rest. Bright as a ray of sunlight, with the cool beauty of a lupin bloom was Subhadra. Fair complexioned, with sparkling eyes and features like the face of goddess Durga! Every morning she used to make garland for the family deity *Banshi Badan* with garden picked flowers. Inside the compound we children used to play tag and hide & seek amongst the rabbit warren of the rooms. However the eastern corner of the house was out of bounds to us. There were two rooms there. One was for my father's eldest brother who was the chief priest and the other for my father, teacher of mathematics in the middle school in the town. In free times father used to practice mathematics on a clay slate in the room and after the evening prayers study the scriptures. The breeze of authority used to flow out from the presence of the two man in the room. In the excitement of a game of hide and seek once I entered the forbidden area. My heart skipped a beat. Father was studying mathematics raptly. Trying to sneak away, my hand was grasped by father - "Come here- tell me what is this?" Fondling my pigtails with one hand he drew a big zero on the earth slate. "This is called zero. It is a big thing. And very strange too. By itself it is nothing- cipher- but if you know how to use it, you can do great things with it. You can make big numbers- so remember it is a very valuable thing, this zero. There should be some zeros in life, got it, pip-squeak?"

No, I did not understand, nothing entered my head. What did my father say and why was beyond me. But there was one thing certain. That incident bridged the distance between us. I lost my fears and to the envy of my siblings, visiting that forbidden area became a habit. And that habit helped me forge such a relationship with my father that, my father's hand magically came forward as my savior from the stifling narrow confines. The same narrow confines, into which my mother also had entered one day, welcomed by the ululations of women. Her circular world was confined within the field of an intricately carved mahogany bed, a pond with green water surrounded by a bamboo thicket that wailed mysteriously. And a kitchen full of brassware tarnished by use and age. Spinning the thread of life in the narrow circular confines my mother's body also took a strange dilapidated shape.

At times I feel, as though all these feelings of good and bad or the signs in life are like the dresses of childhood. Stitched according to the mental size. The bits of experiences lying here and there on the path shapes the life in their form. And those perceptions guide our vision. Perhaps that is why I heard only a groan in the voluptuous form of Wilendorf -a groan of a rotting wound exuding blood and pus everywhere. A parched field withered by draught. Where brassy noontimes shiver in the heat of the sun. Coming back after seeing the Wilendorf Venus, the memories of my mother perturbed my mind - and at night I dreamt

... Mother stepping gingerly down the banks of the pond and the bamboo thicket creaking in the darkness...

When at night Maya stealthily opens her front door, the CRRRR noise is same as creaks of the bamboo thicket

Gautam Patole, Charcol on paper, 44"x28", Courtesy : Flowery Fantasies

-. Entering her room, she switches on the blue coloured light. Water splashes down from the taps -and groping for sleep tossing and turning on my bed, a pale fleeting image keeps coming to me. An image of a huge shadow of fear jumping down in front of a man running away from somewhere and he stops dead in mortal dread. The Akai system in Maya's room emits some sharp incomprehensible sounds. The sounds make my ears itch like the stings of a caterpillar. And in fleeting morpheus, I see some stairs hanging from nowhere – and some robots pushing each other in a desperate attempt to climb them.

We had a close attachment to a stone staircase in our childhood. Climbing up one reaches our ancestral temple. Crumbling, damp and infested with slime. Climbing up by the side of the *srifal* tree on our gateway, the staircase was slippery and cold as a snake. The clapping sound of my uncle's sabots climbing up the steps and morning invocations to gods was our wake up calls. In the evenings, the womenfolk lit earthen lamps below the sacred basil plant on the courtyard. I still remember, on a snow white evening washed by dense streaks of moonlight, father narrated the tale of Brinda and Salagram. The wondrous tale of the god being turned to stone by the curse of pious Tulsi. Sitting by our side old Tankhu drew on his hemp pipe. And so exciting - the acrid smell of hemp wafting in the moonlight!

At times a similar acrid smell spreads in Maya's room. Maya begins to hum as the smoke coils of fresh Afghan charas smuggled by Abdul Rouf makes serpentine coils in her room. And sometimes she vomits her guts out in the washbasin. One poor chair was once crippled by the Afghan charas high. Whenever it gets pitch dark, a few mice frolic about near the maimed chair lying in a corner and a huge yellow stripped spider begins to weave his web faster and faster.

These perpetual movements- rectilinear, spirals or orbiting around some point – those that are neither independent of time nor self-containing. From observation of their form emerges one truth – and in front of my eyes a vision of a pointing finger erupts. A massive index finger directing like a puppeteer, the movements of those women captivated within a narrow confine. No it is not the much imagined fantasy finger of fate. But by its unimaginable power to control the lives of the women makes it really gigantic The finger of authority, an index finger that creates the rules and administers them. Once I saw with my own eyes, the electric movements of such a finger.

A cane marked its cracks to the rhythm of the sacred

incantations of *kumari puja*. That day was the Shukla Panchami. While five adolescent virgin girls were seated on white mattresses on our parlor and being worshipped with all rituals, a sudden roar shocked everyone into silence. A Few of us girls were making tamarind coolers sitting in the mill house and Subhadra, her body coiled into serpentine twists was pulled by her long raven tresses by our great uncle to slam on the courtyard. Far away on the edge of the kitchen garden, a bare untouchable body was visible standing still below an *uriam* tree. When at last, the unrelenting beats of the lash ended and the door to the narrow room by the side of the barn opened, Subhadra's body, bleeding from the black lash marks lay semi conscious on the floor. Her whines, barely audible sounded like those of the mangy mongrel that scavenged our castoffs. And her loosened bladder drenched the cotton *mekhela* she was wearing.

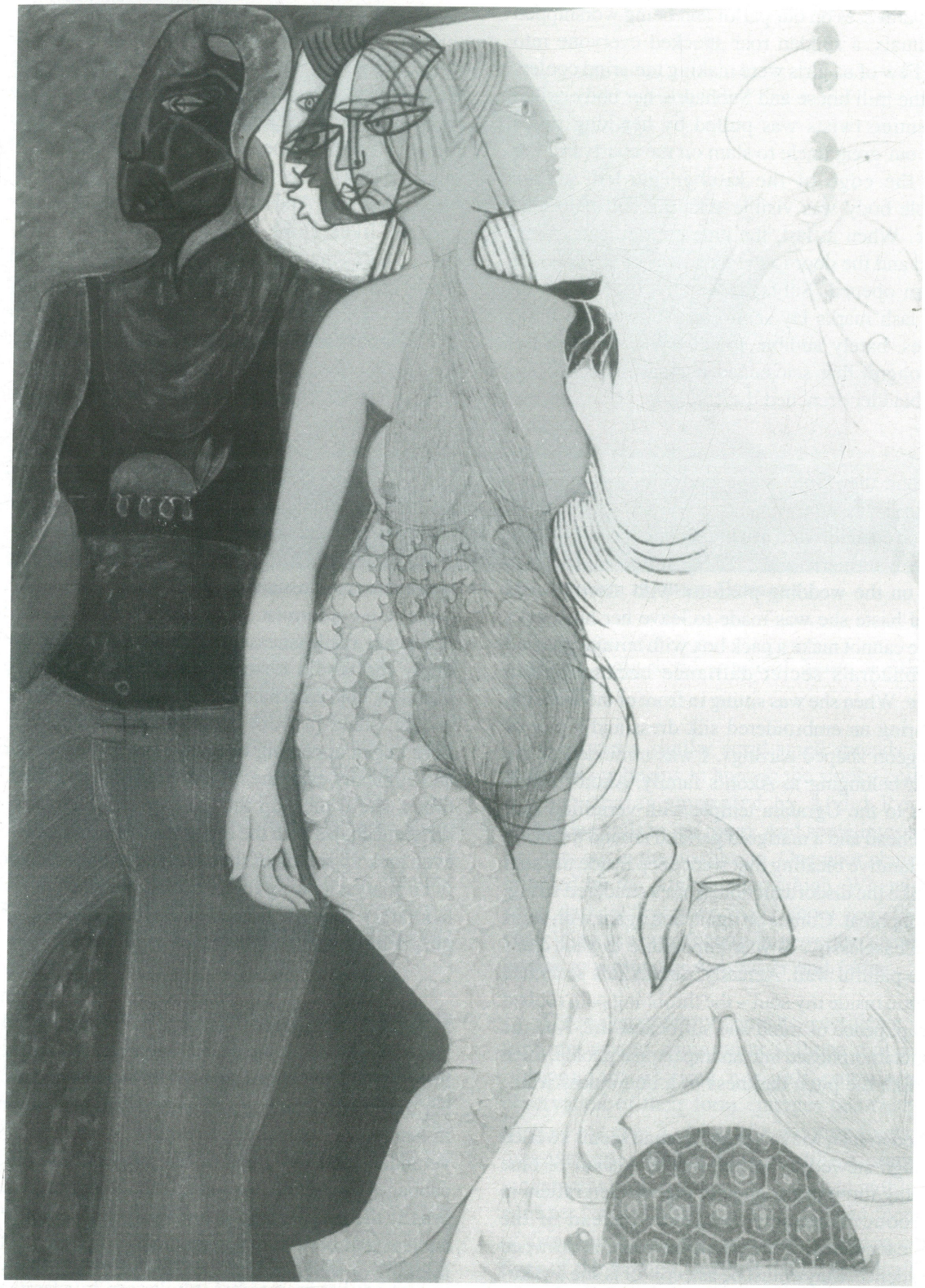
Now and then time is speeded with a shove, like the tape in a cassette on fast-forwarded. Subhadra's life was also cued forward at a breakneck speed. Ritually washed with turmeric and black gram paste, she was set down on the wedding platform with alacrity. And with equal haste she was made to leave her husband's home. One cannot make a pack box with termite gnawed cane; Subhadra's secret dalliance became public knowledge. When she was sitting in front of the wedding pyre, wearing an embroidered silk dress and a pair of golden pigeon shaped earrings, I was reminded of the black goat belonging to Akon's family. Akon's father dragged it to the Ugratara temple with vermilion spot on the forehead and a marigold garland around the neck. And it's plaintive bleating that went deep inside my soul sounded like the discordant note from a sundered string. A deafening bleat. Comes on again and again with short respites. Ceaselessly. It was impossible to shut one's ears to the painful wail. Actually, Subhadra's scars had turned septic inside my soul – the throbbing pain robbed me of sleep, peace of mind and suffocated me. And the wounds metamorphosed into an impersonal phobia, thick and pure like the pitch darkness of a bottomless well.

Steeped in fear, Maya's inner woman seems swelled up as though stewed in boiling liquid. A shaft of blue light seeping through the gaps in the wooden rafters in Maya's room drops onto my floor. Instead of the relentless cacophony of the Akai, the room is drowned in a deep silence. Maya must be asleep – or is she awake? The glowing blue light in her room, the floating silence, an uncertain conclusion pieced together from the fragmented incidents only confused both the real and the illusion.

It was day an year or a half ago. Opening the front door, at the ringing bell, I saw a pretty girl waiting in the veranda wearing a purple pullover and a skirt. " Hello Auntie, I saw the To Let Sign. I am Maya, newly posted here, in the multinational Thames and Arnasson. Earlier I was in Pune, did my Engineering and MBA there." Maya! Girls like Maya are like a waft of fresh air for my mind. And side-by-side the faces of Subhadra and her likes come to mind. So then, times have changed. So smart, free and independent these girls are. But at the same time the same strange feeling pops it's head up; the same feeling I had crossing the threshold of the forbidden room in the eastern corner of our house. A distance, enticing and yet unpredictable! Now and then, I feel a certain wall growing between us and the likes of Maya.

At first I noticed Maya's bright, sculpted face and her firm confident posture. But crossing over the margin that prevents the sight of hazy lines, I noticed many things more. The small birthmark on her neck; the little toe bent at an unusual angle that Abdul Rouf called The Little non-conformist. Now and then she seemed lost. A fervent restlessness used to dance in her eyes. At times she would observe everything with a cynical attention, hold each hair one by one and look for dandruff or lice; stand in front of the mirror to check if lines have began appearing or spread out a dress on the bed and clinically examine if there is a spot anywhere. Or at times, she'd pick up the ashtray and look at it from different angles with the intent gaze of a detective. She'd even pick up shreds of food and chew with the intensity of an analyst looking for an undiscovered element in his laboratory. Strange! An otherwise modern self-confident girl, behaving in such insecure way!

Looking back, my worries had little relevance to Maya, self engrossed within her own autistic world. Not only relevance, the worries were not desirable either. Still! I felt bad; at times slighted. When Maya took down her things from the van and were arranging them neatly in her room, I began daydreaming. We shall sit on the verandah with two cups of tea; chat on and on about cabbages and kings. So Maya's aloofness angered me. Was it the archaic gap growing up between us? That ancient gap between two generations? Slowly I began thinking of Maya as self-centered, devil may care type. The girl racing after position and wealth did not have to orbit within narrow circular confines. She's only sprint ahead – sprint far. But why was I so touchy about Maya?



Chaitali Morajkar, Acrylic on canvas, 66"x48", Courtesy : SK Art

Was it that I saw her as my daughter? Perhaps, Krishdendu's death, my retirement from academic life and absence of a child made me lonely and touchy. Perhaps it was the revenge that fate exacted on me for my feelings of uneasy disgust at the sight of the mothers in our household. Of course, the depression and touchiness could have been brought about by menopause as well. Be it as it may, associating myself with Maya, it was not only doubts and depression that raised its hood but also that dormant phobia which, with time I'd assumed lay fossilized within my sub-conscious.

One day, going to hand over the electricity bill, I saw Maya sitting on the bed with a Barbie doll. Barbie with a clinging swimsuit. A poster of a boxer with sweaty, steel hard sinews adorned the wall by the side of her bed. "I change her everyday" giggled Maya, and gazed at the doll with mesmerised eyes. The plastic girl was beaming having been turned into a 36 – 24 – 36 definition of beauty coded in the prevalent measures of aesthetics. All of a sudden, in my eyes she started dancing. A Plastic girl, dancing to the snip snip snip of scissors. "Scissors, scissors, give me the perfect body." The surgeon would come and cut open her breast to push in a piece of silicone rubber to mould it to the defined shape. And every thing becomes hunky dory – Aha! You become the most valued doll in the market. .....The innocent faces of the rag dolls – faces with marble round heads, two orbs for eyes and the crescent shaped mouth floated in front of my eyes. Harking back to the beauty of their spindly misshapen bodies misted up my eyes.

"Please have a sit Auntie." Maya pressed the keys of her remote at the Akai opened wide it's door of fantasy to reveal a gruesome picture. The city night lit by halogen lamps. Deserted streets. Oil drums, tyres and dilapidated cars littering the floor of a run down storehouse. A slow symphony sliding past the background. A girl lying spared eagled surrounded by shadowy guerrilleros clad in black trousers and leather jackets. Suddenly the shot changes. The singer with hair curled like instant noodles kneel and the symphony soars up. A hand moving to and fro over the bare body of the girl shoves a nylon stocking into her mouth with a sudden jerk. The wild crescendo came to a jangling stop and a deep voice coiled around her stilled body, " I used to love her, so I had to kill her."

Looking at Maya hypnotically glued to the gruesome pale blue screen like an apparition filled me with utter dread. Quickly I made my way out of the room. As a child I'd heard the elephant trapper's tales from the Mahout of Bhadrakanta Bishaya. Deep pits would be dug inside the jungle and covered with foliage. The elephants passing over them would fall down and be trapped. Has Maya ever heard of the tales of such trapped elephants? Or heard their despairing trumpet splitting the stillness? Yes, I felt deadly afraid, but strangely, this fear was very different from my old phobia. That old phobia of mine pushed me forward. Looking at me reading late into the night by the feeble light of an oil lamp, my father's heart softened and one day I came out with my father in a bullock cart to alight in front of the girls school run by the European missionaries. My fear pushed me inside the gate into the picturesque mission courtyard. And I saw the way to escape the narrow circular confines thanks to that phobia alone. Somehow this fear seemed radically different – like that of suddenly falling into a bottomless void. Like the insane phobia of a screaming wild elephant trapped in a pit.

The scream floated in from the emergency room. The doctor was busy scribbling a prescription after assuring that there was no cause for fear or anxiety. The atmosphere was loaded with the piercing smell of antiseptic dettol, click of the heels of the nurses moving to and fro, barely audible sighs and muffled weeping. The noonday sun outside had turned into copper hues. " Is she your daughter? What does she do?" The doctor whispered his query.

"No, she is my tenant. She is in a good post, a company executive."

"Any Idea, why it happened?"

"None at all. Free, well settled, financially sound – everything looked normal"-

Putting the pen into his pocket the doctor stood up and muttered as if revealing some secret -" No authentic cause, all vague, superficial. These days, you can't diagnose anything –".

So true, everything is idiopathic these days. How it happens? Why? It's all mystery. Looking at the scene I was at a loss. Maya lying still. Her face cyanotic and a few bottles scattered here and there. My colleague Aparna sitting outside the operation theatre and banging her head on the walls was also equally at loss. The unexplained mystery of the words "utter negligence"

from her son, grown up amidst plenty and constant attention seemed to paralyse her. A shattered young man walked into Abanindra's mental clinic a few days ago. Entering the chamber, he lifted his shirt up. His whole body, lined with scars looked like the road map of a tangled city center. As the evening grew into night, the boy became more and more restless. For his nights were endless drama, re-enactment of SM flicks at his wife's whim. How strange, as though this was her only route to nirvana!

Surjeet Akre,Oil on canvas, 39"x46", Courtesy : Flowery Fantasies

Coming out of the doctor's chamber to buy some medicines, I caught the sight of Abdul Rouf stepping out of a bar. He was heading for his Yamaha. "Rouf; Rouf!" - I called out to him. The screaming wind whistled through the bare trees. A boy sitting on the roadside was roasting corncobs on a fire – or was it peanuts? Handing over the bike keys to his companion, Maya's friend, the journalist Abdul Rouf came walking with me. Hands inside his pockets, head bowed, he walked silently. Tall, curly haired with an aquiline nose. A Laguna shirt covering his dark torso. Now and then he would pass his hands through the hair. May be because of the difference in our ages, he hesitated answering my questions. Abdul Rouf – Maya's closest friend. He'd often drop into Maya's room, stays there late into night and sometimes, that sharp pungent smell wafts in the air. The nameless relations such as that between Maya and Abdul Rouf were mere fantasies at one time. Those times were such that long black lash marks would break out on your back. The girls were fated to remain trapped within narrow circular confines. Yet those faces would glow with such a fire of perception while lighting the lamps beneath the sacred basil plants! Is that why we feel that the hardships and misfortunes of Maya and her ilk seem loaded with touchiness and hyperbole? Suddenly Abdul Rouf started talking. Slowly uttering the words in a measured way, he started shaking his hands in a peculiar gesture. The words emerging in a slow stream became like a quivering jelly as he ended.

His words still ring in my ears. As if the words are moving hither and thither inside my consciousness. As if the words built a bridge. He had talked about change. Yea – changes great and minute - at times cosmetic, superficial, "on the surface". To be trapped within narrow confines is suffocating. Yet that stasis imparts certain amount of security. Of course like the safety inside a police lock up, that security has no real meaning. Yet stepping for the first time into the unexposed world outside the boundaries, you are dazzled – like a person coming out of a dark hall. Like a newborn screaming at the light after traveling down a dark passage. The thing is to survive that first shock. There was a time when it was possible to know who has laid snares on your path and where. May be due to the defined structure of the stratified society or perhaps due to the limited horizon and simplicity of

the life process. But in today's complex perspective, it is just too hard, nay impossible to guess where such snares are laid and by whom. It is no small matter just to survive in the contemporary flood of global unification, the suffocating stampede of rat race, hang over of old values and culture. Risky indeed; like a tightrope walk - as you walk gingerly on the rope, a sudden slip and the crash. Actually, Maya's crash was also another accident during the race up the steps.

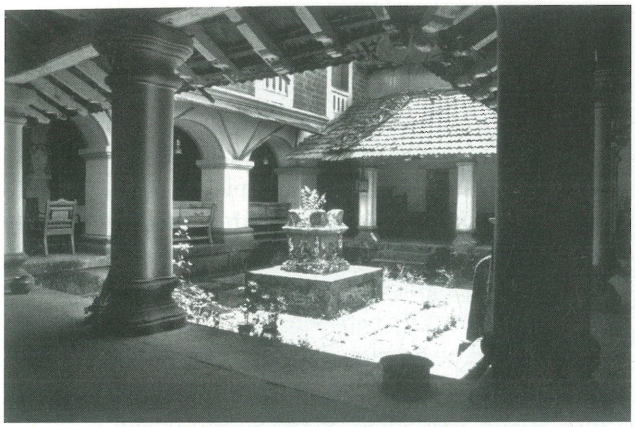
Maya was climbing up the ladder of life with just the right calculations all these days. But all of a sudden she slid down the abyss like an elephant falling down a pit. She was going through an important file in her office that evening. As she wrote a note, Sundaram, her boss sat pouring coffee from a porcelain pot. It was getting late - only she and her boss were still around. Emerged in making the note, she suddenly felt a cold eel crawling along her shoulder and a hot breath on her neck. She shuddered - many conflicting thoughts ricocheting off one another shook her mind. The eel had crawled down from her shoulder and came to stop below the valley. What to do? What should she do? Should she also like a trapeze artist, grasp the fleeting swing on these ropes of desire? Taking advantage of her paralysed state, her boss Sundaram put his hand inside her kurta. A pleasant shudder passed through her - blood coursed faster through her veins. Oh! what now? Proceed to the next step? Should she surrender - as she was considering the next step and was weakening inside, she suddenly saw their DGM standing with a sardonic smile on the open doorway. The game of cat and mice goes on eternally. Just as Maya was almost snared by a cat, that cat inadvertently fell in to another trap laid by another patient and cleverer hunter. Explanation call from the board of Directors, an unexpected transfer to another branch, subordinates superceding Sundaram, and a spreading web of gossip within the company circles, these simultaneous and overpowering pressures bore down on her remorselessly. As she walks down the corridor a stage whisper floats out from a cabin "Nescafe the ultimate taste". Entering the canteen during lunchtime, barely audible "Yeh Dil Mange More!" assaults her ears. Returning to her room, she took out the bottle of Whyte & Mackay, the thick cocktail of Phencidyl, tranquliser pills, Afghan Charas smuggled in by Abdul Rouf slowly pushed her out of all other pressures into oblivion.

"In this huge chaos, you can't afford to be sentimental, you know." Said Abdul Rouf. At one time the extra terrestrial glitter of spontaneous and fluid relationship such as between Maya and Abdul Rouf was like fantasy to us. And now, to be sentimental has become an unaffordable luxury for Maya, Abdul and their ilk. Seeing Maya lying motionless on the floor, I was livid. I felt like giving her a thrashing like Subhadra of yore. When my great uncle picked up the cane to thrash Subhadra, an insuperable void opened up between them. All these days while I was dissecting Maya with judgmental eyes, perhaps that ancient void had also opened up between us. At such times perhaps a whip had also cracked in my clenched fist. Some finer feelings clamoured to survive within her! Yes, that's why, that's why Maya craved death.

Coming down the stone steps after *trisandhya*, my father opened the pages of Upanishad in his study. My father's cubicle, the rush mats on the floor, the books, and the shadowy glow of the earthen lamp spread all over transformed themselves into an straw hut in an ascetic's refuge deep inside forests. *"Astamiti aditye, yagaybalka, chandramastyastimite shantehagnyaow shantayangbachi, kingjyotirebayang purushah?"* - The sun has set, the moon is on the wane, the fire has gone out, speech is stilled - Oh Yagyabalka, what sustains the human race? - Yea, when was it that mankind was free of doubts, of anxiety, of conflicts within? A circular wave is generated when a pebble is tossed into the still waters of a pond. It crests and troughs. One falls and another rises, ceaselessly, in an unending sequence. Suddenly the wall clock struck eleven. It's time for May's medicine. I jump off my bed. The door between our rooms is kept open these days so that I can look after her. Entering her room with a pill in my hand I raise the mosquito net. Oh how strange! A sleeping statue of Wilendorf Venus is lying curled up in agony on the bed. ■

Translated from Assamese
by: Dhruvarka Deka

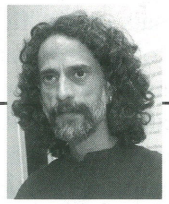
Moushumi Kandali is a bi-lingual writer, art critic and translator. To her credit she has three collections of short stories and text books of fine art for the Board of Secondary Education of Assam.



Untitled , 8"x12", Edition 3/7

Yesterdays, 20"x30", Edition 2/7

PHOTOGRAPHY



Pankaj Mistry

REVERIE

"Knowledge of the means to express our emotion is essential and is acquired only after very long experience"

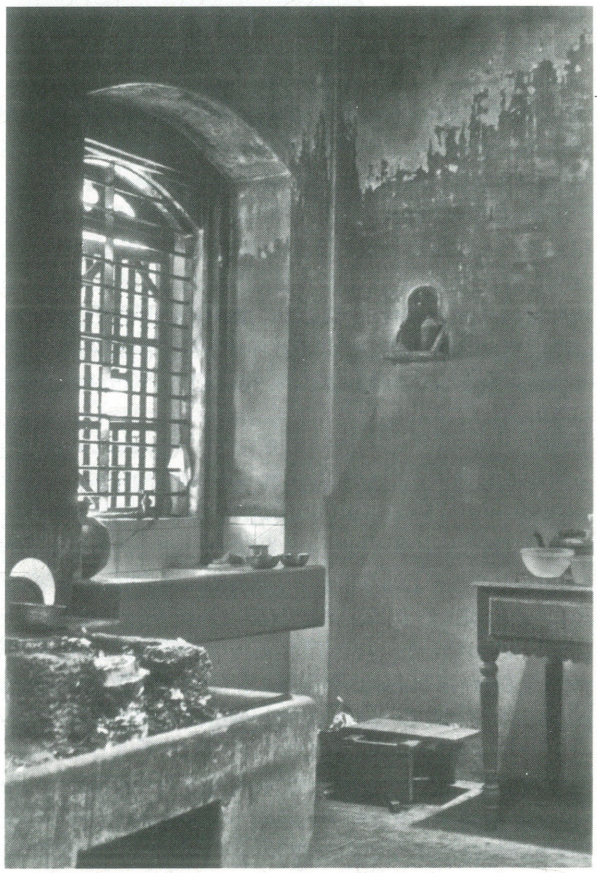
- Paul Cezanne

To me photography is that medium of expression which gives me liberty to transcend time and space, express my emotions as honestly as possible and has been so for more than 24yrs , the time when I was into commercial photography, that phase of my life which has played a very important role in transforming my thought and vision which in turn altered the way I see my subject, the way I perceive it.

This knowledge and discipline assists me in creation of my art now. 1 believe an artist has to be sensitive about himself and the surrounding to "pre visualize" an image, as a sculptor would in a block of formless stone, or as a musician hears a note even before he plays or composes it.

I have learned to see a picture before I take it, so spend less time looking for it, they reveal themselves to me. As Picasso said " I do not seek. I find".

Photography has been a liberating experience, a medium by which I communicate my thoughts and vision as I see them. It has helped me accept not only my tools, materials and circumstances for what



Symphony, in Monotony 120"x13.5", Edition 3/7

Fire to Frying Pan, 20"x30", Edition 1/7

Introspect 2, 20"x30', Edition 1/7

they are, but also helped in accepting myself as I am. I have understood that at the core of every strength or technical advantage lays its weakness, and that in every weakness or disadvantage there is strength waiting to reveal itself to you.

I believe the image you create or the photograph is your statement of communication as you perceive it, you are not making it, nor are you reporting it. This picture also many a times communicates much more than we had perceived at the time of making it, it reveals itself and is subject to interpretation limited to our knowledge of self and circumstances. " .... The very best pictures adapt themselves to many changes in meaning." John Swarkowski.

I try to create images which go beyond the interpretation of the obvious, by way of technique, composition, use of light or subject matter. The choice of medium ie. Color or Black & White I leave it to

Gangajal ? 20"x30", Edition 1/7

Mute Spectator, 8"x12", Edition 3/7

Symphony, in Monotony 120"x13.5", Edition 3/7

City on Vacation, 20"x30", Edition 1/7

Endless Echoes, , 20"x30', Edition 1/7

the subject to dictate as well as the choice of equipment. As it is said the best choice of equipment is no choice at all. This is because it is not you who makes the choice; it is far easier to allow the subject to guide you. From the time photography opened up to mankind, Black & White has predominated in the aspect which brought the romance and nostalgia in the mind with its tonality and fine nuances. Its rightly said "Black and white are the colors of photography, They symbolize the alternatives of hope and despair to which mankind is forever subjected."

Nonetheless, the advantage of a colored image often outweighs the tonal losses. We try to find the solution that brings together the best of both worlds- colour in the black and white image. The war or conflict goes on...

As this conflicts of Color or Black & white goes in my mind so does the gratification of image, also like and dislike of what has been created today might not appeal tomorrow and vice-a-versa. One wise man has said "Something that is now beautiful will change into something ugly, and that which is ugly will become beautiful."

The image that is predominated by color but not limited by it, gives a sense of bliss. "Color is joy, One does not think joy. One is carried by it. The image carries you with it to that time which it personates. It has been my ongoing endeavor to honestly represent the time and space without dating it, creating a timeless existence to which you ie. the viewer is just not a mere spectator but a witness to unfolding of an era.

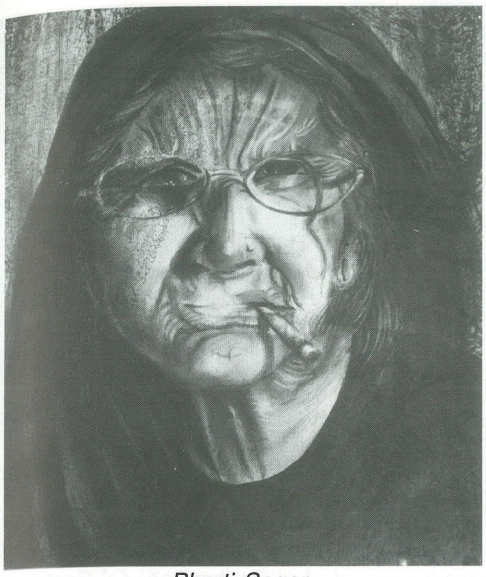
In my work, light is used as an abstraction tool to visually communicate the time and space, where time transcends the given space, prognostic of an expression of timelessness to that image. Photography is but a game of light, I try to play this game to the hilt, use light to create various emotions - emotion of nostalgia, of reminisce and also surprise and bliss. Light or absence of it, is to me a very powerful tool and a medium through which an image can be expressed in photography, the strength of its absence can be communicated so seemingly effortlessly if you have the experience to do so.

".... The limitations of photography are in yourself, for what we see is only what we are." Ernst Haas. Light has always intrigued me, has been an enigma , which I always played with, had an affair with. It has given me pain as well as pleasure at the same time. Today I can say I have understood it, reined it sometimes, but again the confusion surfaces at other times.

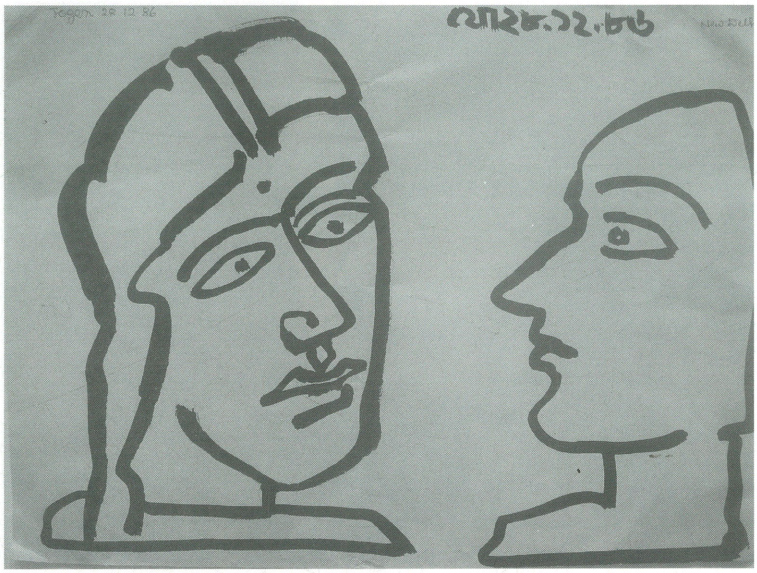
But than as the wise Lao Tsu has said "The wise seem confused, knowing the imperfection of their understanding:"

So the game continues....■

Born in 1963, Pankaj is a second generation photographer. He has participated in exhibitions in India and abroad and has won several awards. He is also visiting faculty at NID, Ahmedabad.



Bharti Sagar,
Conte Arcylic on Paper, 13"x15"



Jogen Choudhury, Ink with Brush on Paper, 11"x15"

REVIEW

Sudhakaran P.

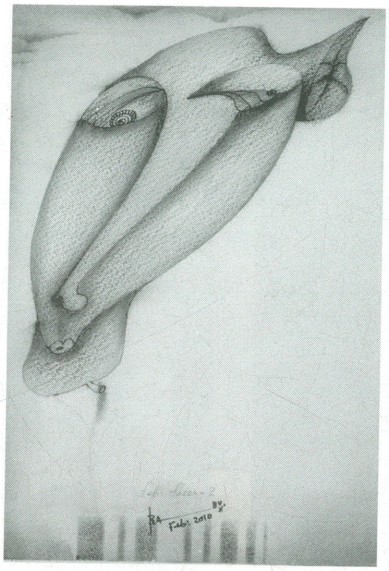
A Meditation Called Drawing

Drawing, probably the strongest of the visual expressions, is as old as the human civilization, or even better, as fresh as the human dreams and imaginations. The early human beings decorated their abode, the rough walls of their caves, with the drawings that reflected their dreams. The early drawings found in the caves of Altamira, in Spain, dates back to the Superior Paleolithic period, which is more than 35,000 years old, which shows the human race's involvement with art since ages.

Over the ages the art of drawing too passed through a chain of evolutions, as is the case of human civilization. From the Egyptians who decorated the Pyramids – the magnificent constructions in the history – with drawings, to the Greeks who brought about the concept of 'balance' in the drawing, every phase of human civilization has depictions that underscored the importance of drawing as a challenging art form. The wall paintings and miniatures of India too are rooted on the power of the line, which is kept alive by the tribal artists of our times too. When J.Swaminathan brought these artists to the mainstream, he was also giving a new lease of life to the drawing tradition of India as well.

Mark Rathinaraj, Charcoal on Paper, 11"x15"

Suhas Roy, Charcoal on Paper, 17"x19"



Babu Xavier, Mixed Media on Paper, 9"x12"

Rekha Rao, Oil Pastel, 7"x11"

From being the decorations of their huts, the drawings found their way into the wider world.

And this makes us connect the evolution of drawing to the centuries' old invention – the paper. The invention of paper had also redefined the concept of drawing. Instead of the cave walls and the animal skins, now they got another surface, which would soon become a popular medium. Slowly, with the paper, the way colours were applied also changed thus giving a new radiance to the drawings.

Akbar Padamsee, Water Colour on Paper, 14"x10"

But it is the line that got mightier and mightier with the advent of paper, which was made popular by Arab and Chinese traders. It is not just a dividing line between two colours or for that matter a medium that just divides a space into many. A drawing is simply the essence of art. That is why it can be said that the journey of the line is the journey of the humanity too.

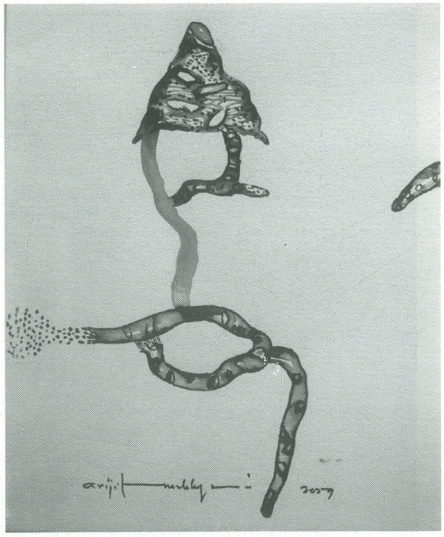
The might of the line is clearly evident in the famous drawing of the Vitruvian Man by Leonardo da Vinci, which was done towards the end of the fifteenth century. Known as the Proportions of Man, this pen-and-ink drawing on paper depicts a male figure in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs apart and simultaneously inscribed in a circle and square. As the name depicts, the drawing is based on the correlations of ideal human proportions with geometry described by the ancient Roman architect Vitruvius.

If this drawing was all about proportion, Picasso's drawings (and of course, his paintings too) astound the viewers with their 'lack of proportion'. How a simple drawing can become a legend is evident from Pablo Picasso's lively drawing of the sleeping beauty or Don Quixote.

Such examples underscore the independent existence of the drawing, which was often considered 'inferior art' by many. Now we know a

Harsha Vardhana S. Mixed Media on Paper, 8"x11"

Sunil Das, Ink-Drawing on Postcard, 6"x8"



Avijit Mukherjee, Ink and Water Colour on Paper, 12"x14"

drawing is not just a preparatory aid to the artist, like the architect's blueprints. It is through the drawings that the genius of an artist, with all its spontaneity, comes to the fore, as manifested in this show. It is the sketchbook that opens the world of the intimate personality of an artist – the 'handwriting' of an artist.

From darkness to light to the mood of the settings, the curved lines, both thick and thin, literally redefine a space. To take the expression of an art restorer friend of mine, drawing moonlight with charcoal underscores this creative force of the drawing only.

A drawing is more of a meditative journey that captures the real life that may or may not be translated into a canvas.

It is this meditative vein that is evident in the sketchbooks of the modern-day masters like A. Ramachandran, who recreates the innocent beauty of the tribal life through his drawings and paintings. The sketchbook of Ramachandran brings to life not only the tribals of Rajasthan but also various pictorial languages of the country. His paintings are no doubt the continuation of his sketch book.

Iranna G.R., Drawing on Paper, 42"x58"

Of course, these sketchbooks take us to the tradition of Shantiniketan, which brought about a radical change in the academic art styles that was prevalent in India, and also taught youngsters about the creative strength of the line. However, many talented artists in the younger generation are not very keen about drawing, especially live sketches. When Photoshop became the workshop, quite a lot of them felt that the live sketch has nothing to do with their art, which is driven by the market rather than the creative spirit or its spontaneity. A live sketch is something that captures what a photograph cannot capture – the real spirit of a setting, the life and its colours.

This major show of drawings, which comprises many of the major artists of our times, is a narrative that tells us the evolution of the art of drawing in modern-day India. These artists – from abstract painters to figurative painters to sculptors – tell us how drawings act as a force of inspiration for them.

A spectrum of artists in this show takes us to a new world of creative expression, where the line overtakes the colour. And a world that is full of colour, too. ■

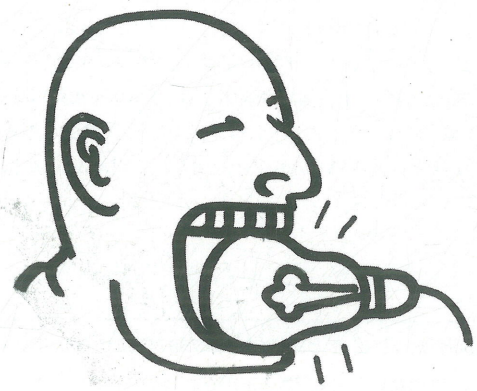
Sudhakaran P. is a Bangalore-based journalist and art critic.

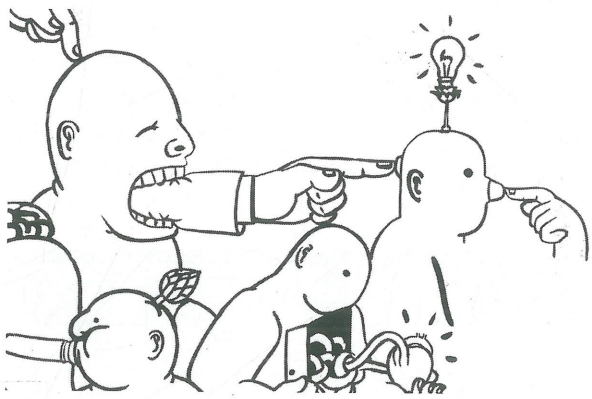
REVIEW

Renu Rana

MANJUNATH KAMATH

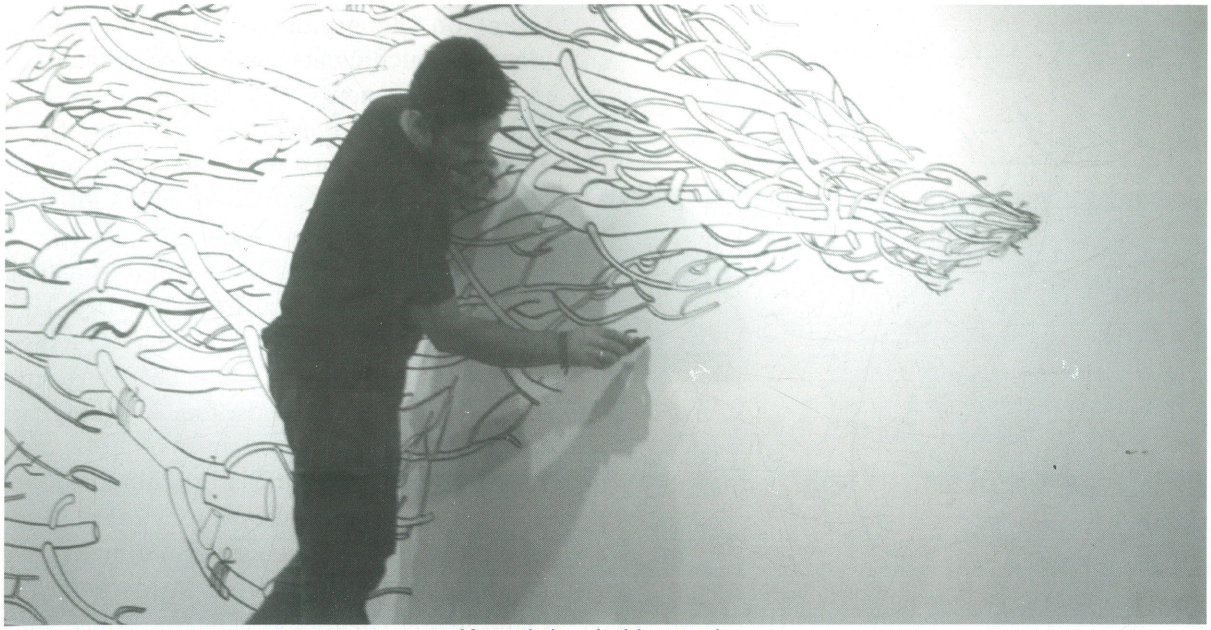
Line is imp. Indian traditional art depended on that. Warli, Kalighat all were line related works that wowed the world. The colourists can take a backseat for now....Manjunath Kamath is here. He is one artist whom you cannot label; he is a painter, sculptor, video installation artist and does what requires a true artist to do. Having trained





at the Academy of Visual Arts, Mysore, and then a stint at the School of Art & Design, University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, UK, Kamath started the climb in a rather unusual style.

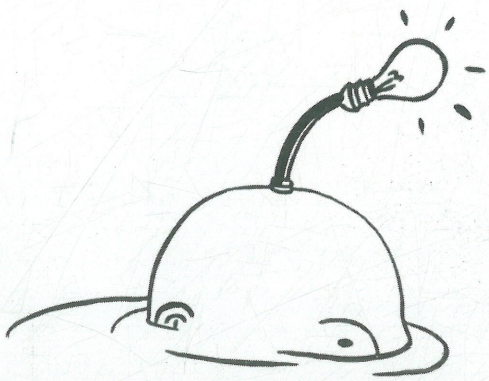
Gallery Espace, an art gallery that



Kamath lost in his creation

encourages artists to be radical, experimental and think out of the box and then practising what it preaches, it goes ahead and exhibit their works and promotes them like no other galleries. If there are galleries in Hauz Khas Village and Lado Sarai, Gallery Espace will prove its mettle and success by establishing in a place like New Friends Colony where even footfalls are not guaranteed. I would say the right gallery for the typical work!

Thus, when two extra ordinaire meet, it results in something unusual. Kamath is using the walls and ceilings of the galleries as his personal, though temporary canvas. When we say personal, it means that he is drawing what takes his fancy, with no previous sketch, no precedent, except, of course, the wall painters of Madhubani or Warli or maybe some obscure tribes who paint for the sake of aesthetic, take pleasure in what they have painted and then after a while whitewash the wall, in preparation of painting something afresh.



Similarly, Kamath is painting for a week, making the walls of the gallery come alive and then at the end of the week whitewash the place as if nothing had occurred. Many people, many opinions. Some opined that it was more gimmickry than serious art work, others found it bizarre while there were some who were keenly waiting to see the end result.

"Don't you wish to see your painting live long, if not exactly wishing it to be immortalized in a museum?"

talent on the gigantic canvas. It was sheer pleasure watching his hands move spontaneously, as if a divine energy was guiding him; no time to plan, think and execute. It was the most amorphous art work that seemed so organised. His hands followed the diktat of his mind with a unique synchrony. The composition was contemporary and traditional, serious and funny, profane and profound at the same time. He used the power points on the walls, the drain mesh on the floor, the dangling bulbs on the ceilings, making them a part of his composition. Anything already existing was converted into objects seeming specifically installed to aid the composition.

Gallery Espace saw a qualitative and quantitative shift in the viewers. Some stood there gaping at the skillful flow of his hand, others marvelled at his composition and some came out of curiosity. Like I mentioned earlier, as many people, that many opinions. Oblivious to all, Kamath united his physical, mental and emotional energies into doing what he had set out to do. Proving the critics wrong, Manjunath Kamath had the last laugh.■

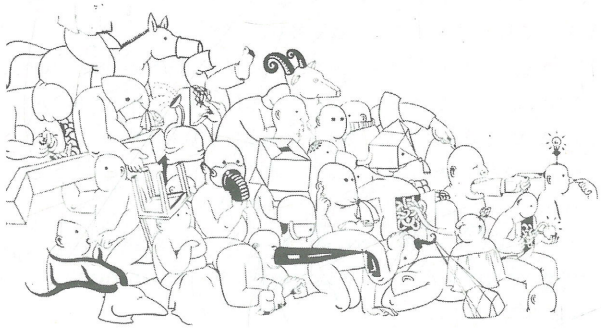
Photos- Manisha Tripathy

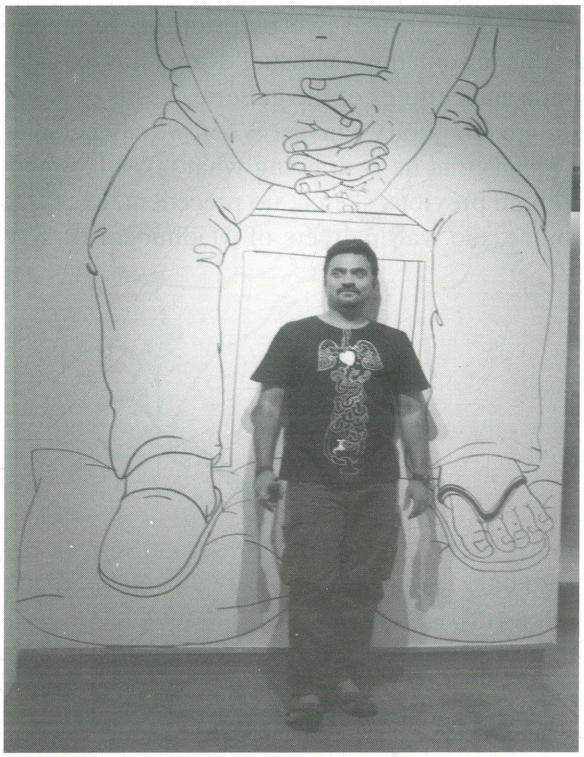
Renu Rana is a Delhi based art critic, sculptor and curator.

Like a true artist, his concern is till he is working on an art work. He puts all his energies into creating a masterpiece and then leaves it to its fate.

"Is it possible to detach yourself from the work you have put your heart and soul into?'

He seemed concerned just with putting his





Manjunath Kamath

Victor Vijay Kumar

Arcylic on Canvas, 78"x58" Change Conciousness

Mobile: 9818301496
E-mail: vkumar196@yahoo.com

Manjunath Kamath

J.P. Singh

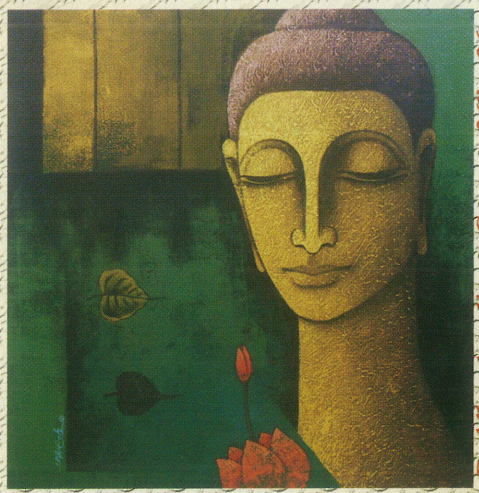
Buddha, Acrylic on Canvas, 24" x 36"

Krishna, Acrylic on Canvas, 12" x 12"

India Beauty in Waiting Acrylic on Canvas, 16" x 36"

Krishna, Acrylic on Canvas, 24" x 36"

Buddha, Acrylic on Canvas, 24" x 36"



Buddha, Acrylic on Canvas, 36" x 36

Senior Artist in Rashtrapati Bhavan

E-38, Type-III, "G" Point, President's Estate, New Delhi-110001

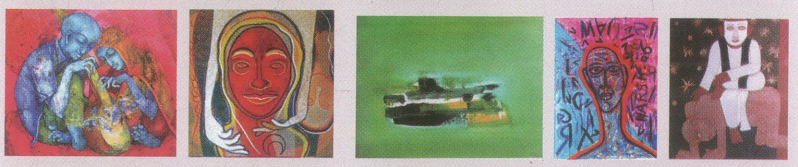
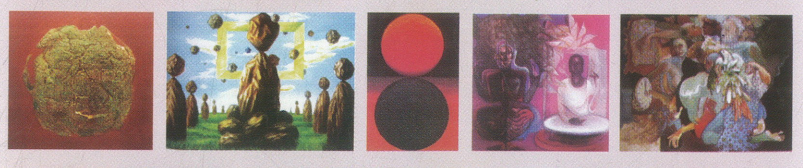
e-mail : jpsinghartist@yahoo.co.in & jpsinghartist@gmail.com

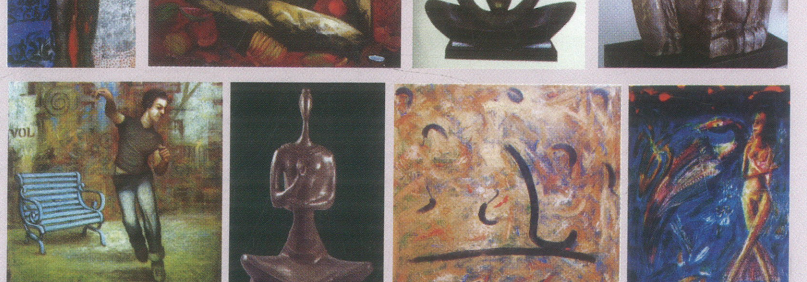
website : www.jpsinghartist.com Mobile 9811466343

51

CONTEMPORARY ARTIST OF INDIA

Gogi Saroj Pal	Arun Pandit
Prafulla Dahanukar	Anandmoi Banerji
Shyam Sharma	Chandrashekhar Acharya
Trilok Koul	Harsh Vardhan Sharma
Umesh Varma	John Philipose
Amitava Bhowmic	Jyotiranjan Panigrahi
Ashit Paul	M. K. Puri
Balajit Singh	Mamoon Nomani
Chandramani Biswal	Muthu Koya
D. Ravi	V. Nagdas
Ganpat Bhadke	Naresh Sharma
Ishwer Dayal	Navina Ganju
J. N. Singh	Prem Singh
J. M. S. Mani	Prashant Kalita
K. R. Subbanna	Pranam Singh
L.L Varma	Raghu Newre
Mahendra Jayantilal Kadia	Ramchandra Pokale
Milan K. Desai	Ravinder Singh Jamuwal
Partho Pratim Ganguli	Ramesh Waghela
Ravinder Salve	Sachin Shantaram Chandorkar
R. Srinivasan	Sujitha Shankar
Rajendra Prasad	Sachindra Nath Jha
Sandeep Chakrborty	Shrikant Poddar
Suresh Sharma	Shankar Ghose
Shrikant Pandey	Subrato Paul
SurenderJagtap	Tapas Sarkar
Vinay Sharma	Ved Nayar
Amresh Kumar	Vipulchandra Das



22nd September to 28th September 2010

Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi

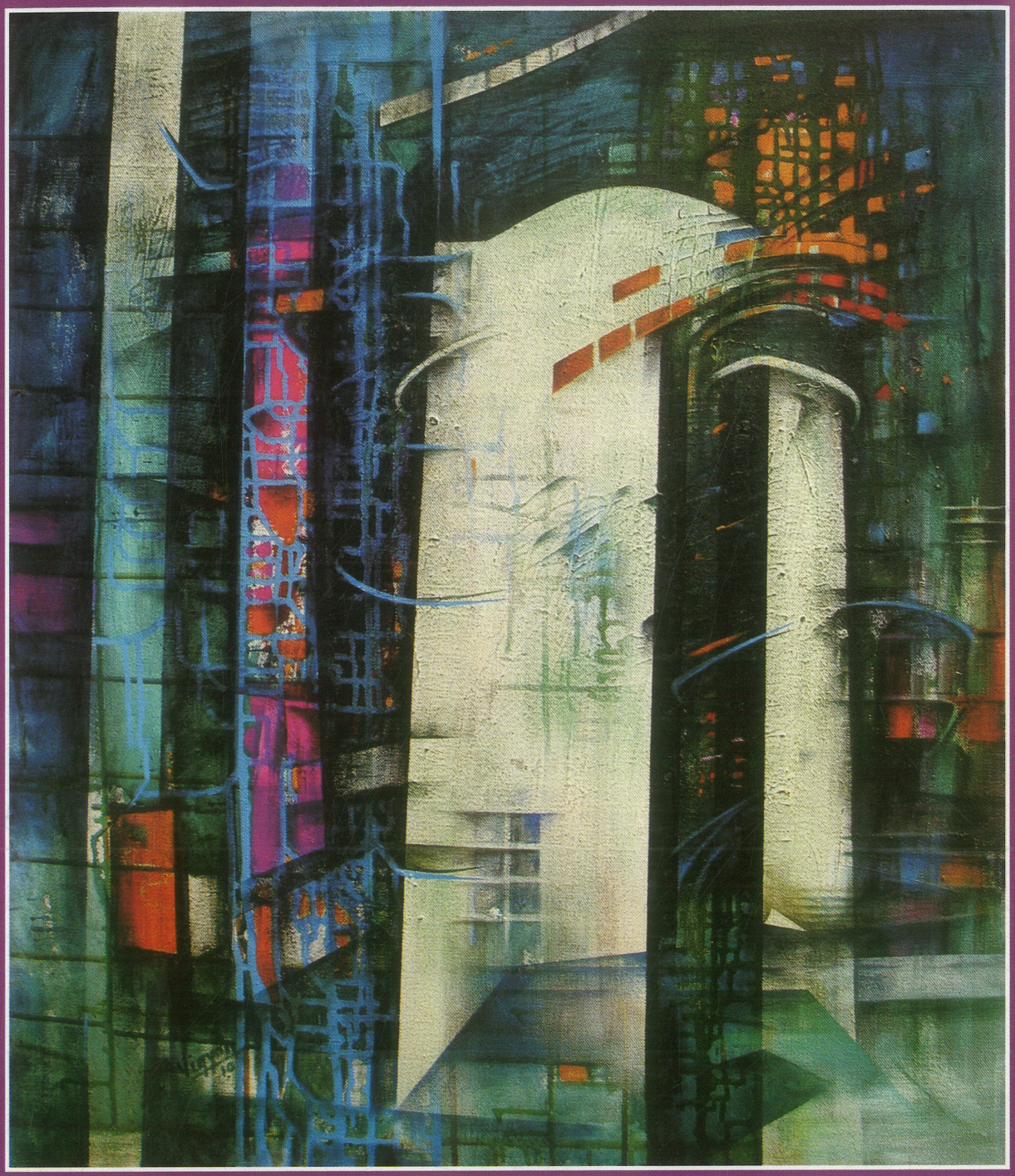
Curator

Shrikant Pandey

Mobile: 09818760180

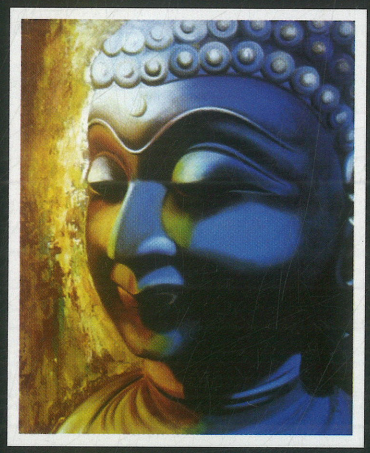
E-mail: shrikantpandey2006@yahoo.co.in

VIGYAN VRAT



Space & Vision-008, Acrylic on Canvas, 30"x36"

Artist Contact No. : 09810224571
E-mail: vigyanvrat@yahoo.com



Solo Exhibition of Paintings
from 15th to 21st January 2011

Parthasarathy Pal

At

Lokayata, Mulkraj Anand Centre, Hauz Khas, Village, New Delhi

Mobile: 98105 30799, 98108 70545, email: parthasarathypal@gmail.com

Courtesy
Mr Sudish Kashinath - An Art Lover

Kanu Patel

Oil on Canvas

Size : 48" X 72"

Exhibitions:

26th October to 1st November 2010

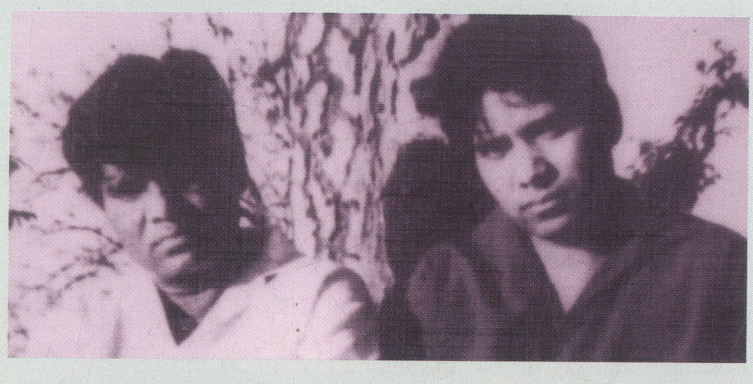
Nehru Centre Art Gallery
Nehru Centre, Discovery of India,
Dr. Annie Besant Road,
Worli, Mumbai - 400018

LAJJA
Art Gallery

2nd Floor, Super Market, Dr. Rajendra Marg, Nana Bazar,
Vallabh Vidyanagar 388 120, Gujarat, India.
Phone : (R) +91 - 2692-233863, 64 (M) 98250 41289
E mail : lajjak@gmail.com

SHRADHANJALI TO MY GURUJI

Late Shri Ram Singh Ji Late Shri Babu Singh Ji



PRITHVI SONI

Oil on Canvas

Exhibition of Prithvi Soni's Works like paintings, film banners, book covers, film getup designs etc.

From 27th December, 2010 to 2nd January, 2011

at

ARTIST CENTRE GALLERY

Adour House, First Floor, 6K, Dubash Marg, Kala Ghoda, Mumbai – 400001, Ph : 022 – 22845939

Prithvi Soni, Dheeraj Residency, 905, B – Wing, opp. Goregaon Bus Depot, New Link Road, Goregaon (w), Mumbai – 400104, Mobile: 9820044357 , Email: prithvi.soni@yahoo.com

V.C. BURMAN of DABUR
presents

V I J E N D E R S H A R M A

' BIGNNING'

Oil on Canvas, 37 x 53 inches

ARTS INDIA MOVEMENT
237, BANK ENCLAVE, LAXMI NAGAR, DELHI - 110092
TEL. : + 91-98100 38501, 011-43021499
E-mail: artsindiamovement@yahoo.co.in

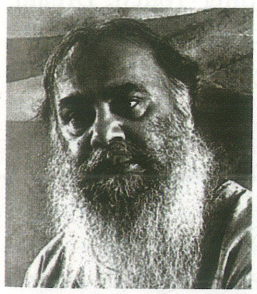
Website: www.vijendersharma.com

Shuvaprasanna

PROFILE

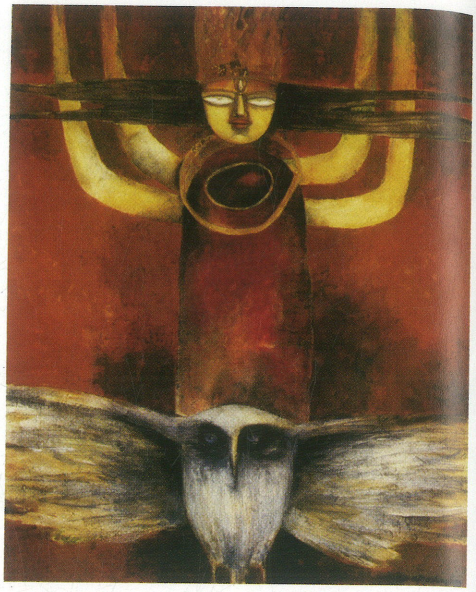
Archana B. Sapra

THE ART OF SHUVAPRASANNA



Shuvaprasanna

Sri Shuvaprasanna Bhattacharya more popularly known as Shuva da by his juniors and Shuva by his contemporaries began his foray into art at a very early age. The little boy, fond of sketching and drawing portraits of the patients who came to visit his father's clinic, turned out to be the beginning of an eventful and creative journey for the master artist, full of stories and a large body of remarkably varied work. His talent in making portraits and illustrations also stood him well during his early days of struggle first as an art student at the Indian College of Art and Draftsmanship at Rabindra Bharati University that he had joined against much family resistance, and later as a young artist trying to make a living at a time when art had hardly any takers. It was his training in graphic art and specialization in Intaglio and lithography in Germany and New Mexico that brought him in an interface with the wider world, while he also continued to refine his skills as a painter. The city and its socio- political culture have continued to be an integral part of the artist's life and work. After completing his art college education, he became a member of the Calcutta group in the early 70s. Being an energetic person and a good organizer he helped organize several exhibitions of Calcutta artists work in various Indian cities. Later he set up his own training institute for young aspiring artists as the College of Visual Arts that he ran from 1975 to 90, where many of today's acclaimed artists were initiated into art and where he met his wife Shipra, also an artist. The ArtsAcre artists' studio and gallery commune that he set up in 1983 was subsequently inaugurated by his friend and mentor German author and artist Gunter Grass. He has now re-formed the institution as Arts Acre Foundation in a bigger better and professionally managed form to make it more inclusive with space and scope for across art form



synergy and to be run as self-financing cultural centre.

The city of his birth and where he grew up and lives has been the central theme, throughout his artistic journey that has in fact traversed from Calcutta to Kolkata, the City of Joy. The renditions around the city of his abode in myriad ways- its people, architecture-humble dwellings as well as palatial bungalows, its cultural ethos and socio-political under currents, continue to reverberate through his work in different colours and representations. There are rag pickers and urchins besides street performers that emphasize the grey, the pain and the squalor of the city and its people alongside its irrepressible spirit and survival instinct. The artist's repertoire in this genre includes Calcutta, Metroplis Re-visited, Calcutta Black and White and Metropolis: Portraits of Calcutta series. There is an impressive body of his charcoal drawings, etchings and paintings on paper and canvas that reverberate around the city, including his famous painting Mute Silence Calcutta71 that Mrinal Sen found so powerful and appropriate that he decided to use it as the poster image for his film on the subject.

Known also for his amazing series Crows that feature in Shuvaprasanna's charcoal drawings, sketches, graphics and canvases, black and white, occasionally with a touch of colour, he has a large body of winged creatures in his repertoire. He looks at crows as a significant motif of the city, omnipresent on roof tops or hanging wires, just anywhere and everywhere, often in search of some resting place or food like the city's street urchins. Shuvaprasanna's outlook on crows seems to make an echo with that of Noble Laureate Ted Hughes, with whom he exchanged notes though they never met. While the artist reflects his thoughts in his imageries of the crow the poet does so in verse. Besides crows, there are also owls, eagles and storks in his renderings Aves series. The feline- street dogs and donkeys familiar to the city also appear in some of his graphics and paintings. It is the innocence of the creatures always around in the city and their survival instinct against all odds that the artist finds so fascinating.

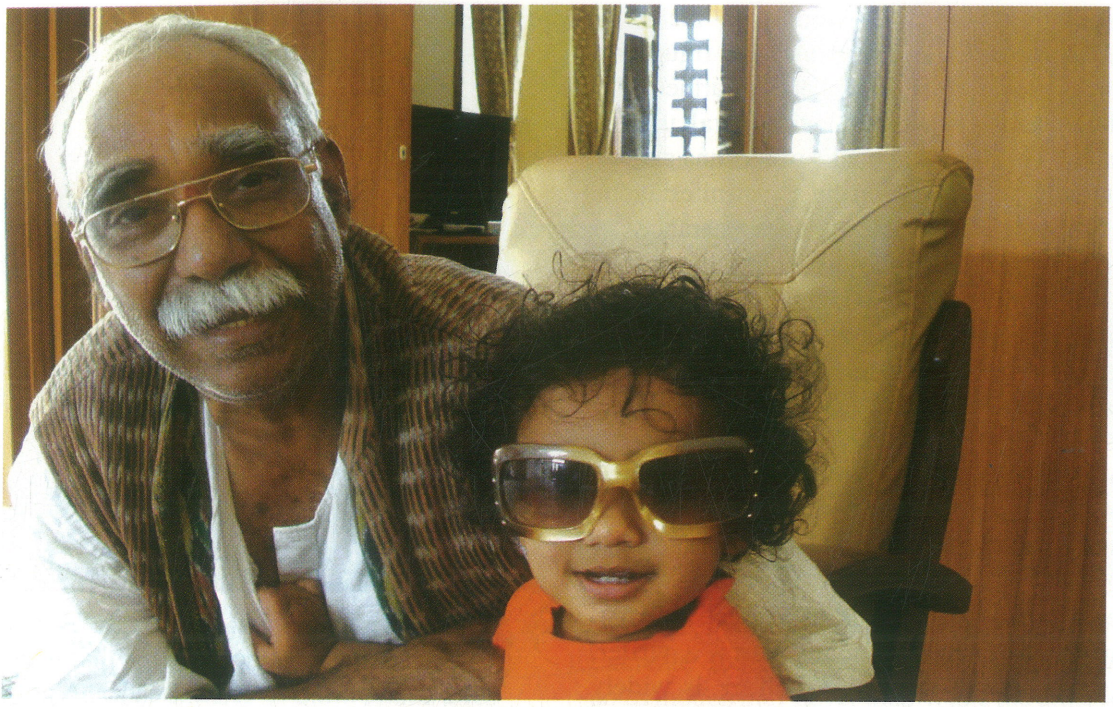
There are other series including Touch, Dream, Abode, Lament and Wrapped where much of the work is predominantly black and white or burnt amber with a graphic fusion of symbols and images that create a semi abstract illusion. His Time/Clock series that resulted from his study of German obsession with punctuality during a visit to the country, also suggests an affinity with Salvador Dali's work. In the Illusion series the artist features still life images and the flora and fauna beautiful flowers and fluttering butterflies in bright mauves, blues and other lively colours, sensuous and coded with a touch of the erotic to signify the cycle of life. Then he started to explore a new domain creating a substantial body of work around icons. This makes a creative breakthrough for the artist, as the surrealistic oeuvre and austerity in his work of the earlier phase is over taken by a richer imagery evocative of love and grandeur in a refined texture and a bold palette at the turn of the millennium. A creative maturity is reflected in Icon and Evocative Expressions series that focus on metaphysical themes. Inundated with

various divinities- Gods and Goddesses- including Durga, Kali, Radha and Krishna, the figurative imagery in mixed media is enhanced further with use of abstract forms and occasional use of calligraphy. The myth and magic of Krishna and his consort Radha is captivated in diverse manifestations of the Godly pair and their varied appearances in numerous incarnations. Lord Krishna in various moods and modes that had caught the artist's fancy is painted in bold blues, yellows, and oranges to represent a joyous ambience. His head and torso are loosely linked often with a chord. There are playful scenes of Radha and Krishna in various compositions. Supported with textural use of gold and silver foil, his paintings represent the vibrancy of life and nature with flowers in full bloom and birds singing.

Besides his impressive track as a creative artist, Shuvaprasanna a man of many parts- a writer, teacher, leader, and institution builder, is widely commended for his work as a social activist artist. It is his expertise in portraiture that brought him close to many eminent social and political leaders and ambassadors, whom he immortalized through his art. This proximity to socio-political personalities has helped catapult him onto a social activist stage. Full of life and ever eager to help others, he is a people's person and a fatherly figure on contemporary Indian art circuit.

There are some distinct features that mark Shuva's work of the last five or so decades. A graphic artist with fine technique he is also a master figurative and narrative painter who has also experimented with sculpture besides designing and illustrations. He often works in series to focus on one theme at a time. The texture, the palette and the composition are all very carefully planned by the artist who has evolved his own personal idiom in a distinct style "through constant trial and error", says the artist. Shuva's choice of colours is significant as each colour has its own story to tell. His Krishna is blue since born at dark lunar midnight. The ocean is also blue as are the clouds. Kali and kal are black. Bhakti and sunshine appear in bright Reds, mauves and yellows. Greens denote nature and white evokes feelings of purity. Shimmering gold suggests preciousness. Though in a realistic mode and inspired by the happenings in the world around, his work is not photo realistic but is colored in the artist's own dreams and experiences. His earlier creatives were more surrealistic in tone impacted by life as he saw it in a poverty stricken strife torn Bengal and Calcutta of the time. As things get better in his own life as well as the society around, the art of Shuvaprasanna reflects a more confident and delightful look as seen in his impressive body of current artistic expressions.■

Archana B. Sapra is a designer, art critic and architect.



Vaikuntam with his grandson

INTERVIEW

Renu Rana

Thota Vaikuntam

As I went up the "Whisper Valley" in the posh Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad, I was wondering about the journey of an artist from a humble village in Telangana to the most sought after locality in the heart of the city. The transition was not just geographical, it was an artistic journey, through the maze of mediums, themes, compositions, adulation and criticism. Pulling the reins of my imagination, I entered his house and was awestruck by the simplicity of their life and lifestyle. Vaikuntam, the icon, that the art fraternity idolizes, has retained the humbleness and the modesty so rare to be seen in one at that level.

As I took out my pad and pen, Ramaneesh, his two year old grandson, took centre stage and Vaikuntam was too happy to be in the shadow. The joy that I witnessed on his face was immeasurable, something that no amount of praise, appreciation or money could have caused. From personal bliss I gently led him to the reveal some professional truths.

Vaikuntam's Telangana figures have become his identity. He carries his background with him.

"What makes you so fiercely attached to the local people?"

"I studied western concept at College of Fine Arts in 1960, and I have nothing against foreign themes as well. But I wanted to portray my own land, my own people."

I prodded further.

"My mother fell ill during the period I was establishing myself as an artist. I spent time with her in the village. The time spent there was enough to make me fall in love with my village. I wanted to show it to the outside world too", he continued.

Apparently, he was much attached to his late mother. "Yes, she was my muse", he admitted. "I portrayed her and her simple activities".

And the world loved not just the simple theme but

the mannerism, the primary, bold colours, the thick, strong line. Lo and behold, he was hailed as the next best thing in the swinging world of art. The figures, mostly of women, evoked a sense of earthy voluptuousness found in the mural and folk painting traditions of South India. The use of simple details like caste marks, gold jewellery, flowers and an occasional parrot give his paintings a distinctively Indian flavour.

"But the motif has, in the past years, become repetitive, over exposed," I expressed my personal view.

He admitted that he had come under a lot of flak and criticism due to the same.

"Yes, monotony has seeped in now, the vitality that was there has decreased" and he sounded weary. The motif that had catapulted him to an iconic status was the cause of disparagement.

'So, do we expect a change of composition?"

Well, he wasn't willing to comment more but admitted to wanting to broaden the theme, not change it.

"Modify it", he said.

The mention of Telangana and his background brought us to the present day social order. He seemed disappointed, nay, disillusioned with the neo societal requisitions.

It was time to come back to his first love.

Vaikuntam was glad to know that many find his paintings to induce a calming and a tranquil effect. With a short laugh, he brushed aside the compliment and continued with the thematic aspect of his works.

"On a flat two-dimensional surface, the large figures occupy nearly all of the pictorial space and express a sense of monumentality. The line of your work has a magical quality suggesting both contour and volume. You consciously transform the line of force, volume and tactile feeling into one of decoration to suit your purpose. How?"

That was a long enquiry and I was expecting a long drawn explanation.

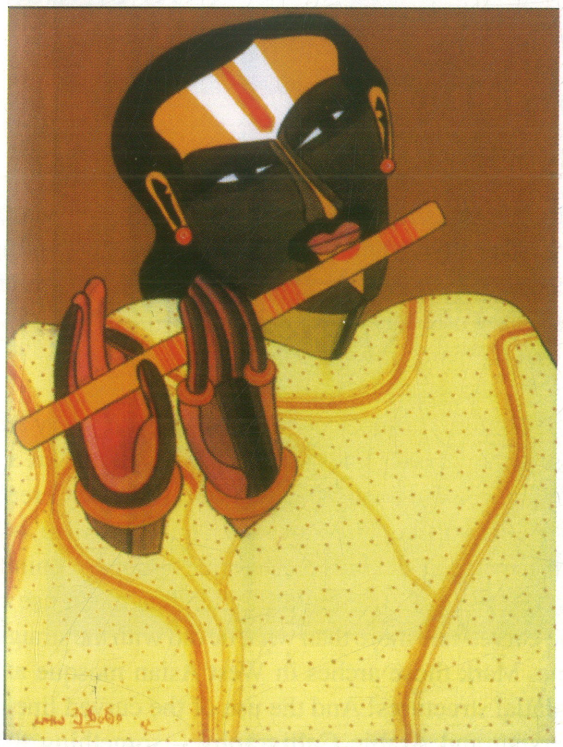
Nonchalantly, he answered, "with the use of controlled and fluid lines, juxtaposed with brilliant primary colours like red, green, yellow, dark brown and white."

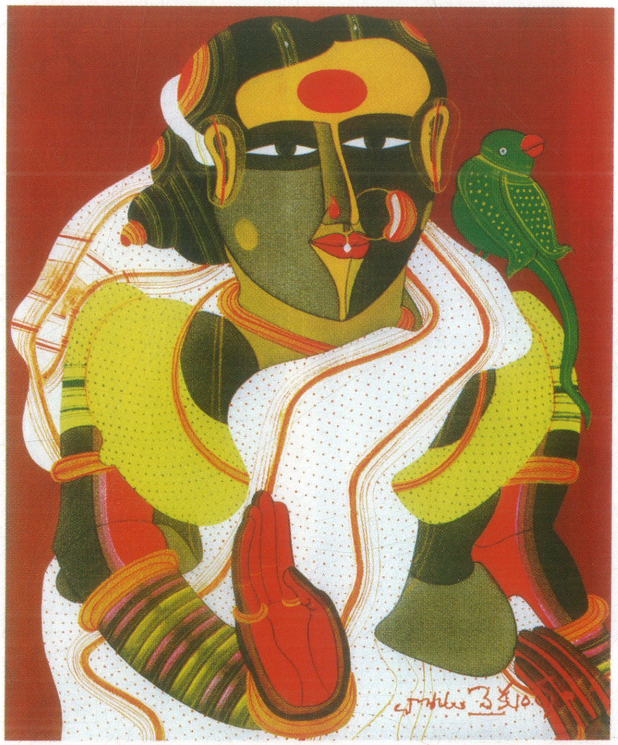
"And?"

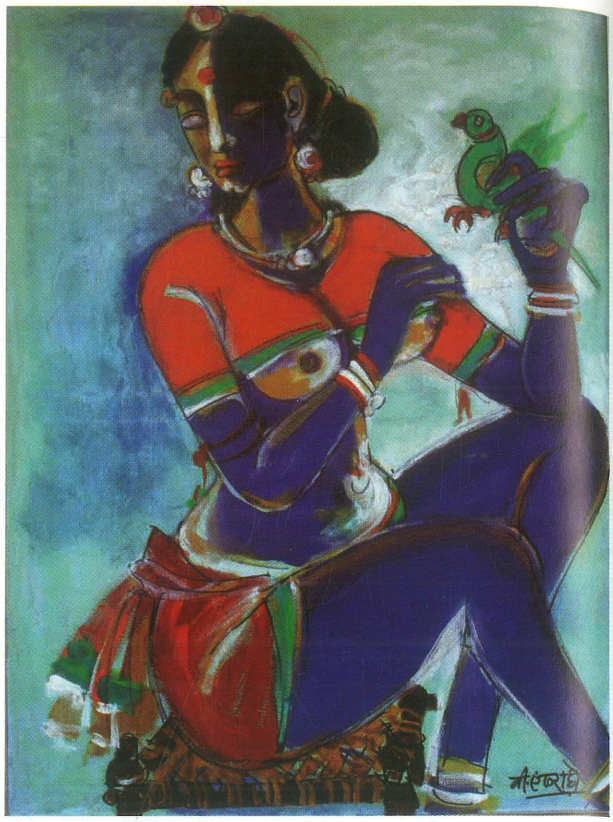
"I think that takes care of it".

His attention was diverted by the appearance of Ramaneesh, his adorable grandson. I knew my interview had come to an abrupt halt. He had more important things on his mind now. His love for the toddler surpassed his passion for art...for the time being at least !■

Renu Rana is a Delhi based art critic, sculptor and curator.



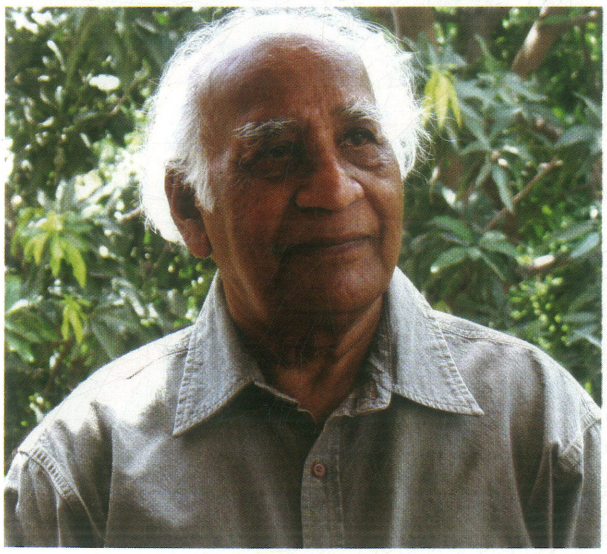




PROFILE

R. S. Yadav

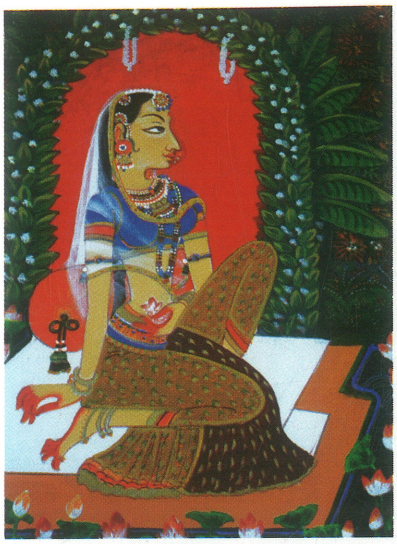
V. S. RAHI

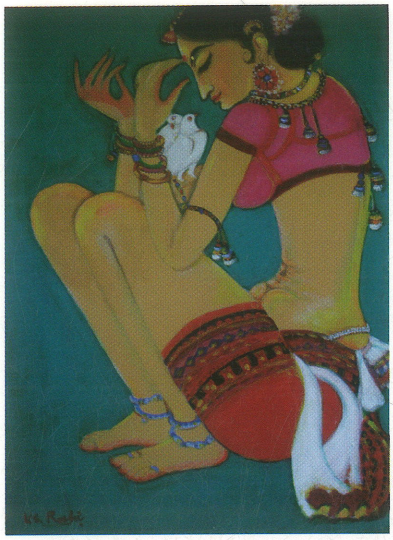


V. S. RAHI

Line, figure and form have created world of visual arts. The days when the caveman drew his hunting scenes on his cave's walls are long gone. But his art and his world has remained to inform the posterity about the hard (raw) life he lived.

The civilized art does not use his crude imagery and straight (and odd) lines. The lines of civilized art are rhythmic, even poetic and the figurations they create are enjoyable. The curved line in nature has participated in all kinds of anatomies – human, animal or vegitational. The cultured man has made use of the curved line more than what he did with the straight line. Mark those arches in West Asian mosque and palatial structures! And the use of the curved line in Persian and Arabic Calligraphy – something that

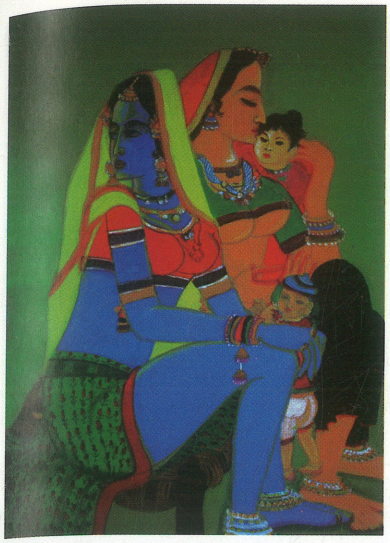
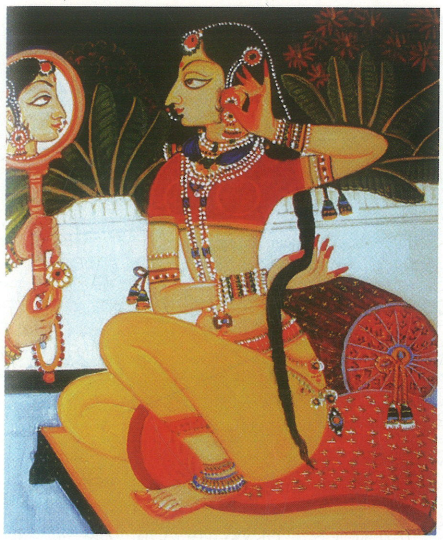




made writing a thing of beauty.

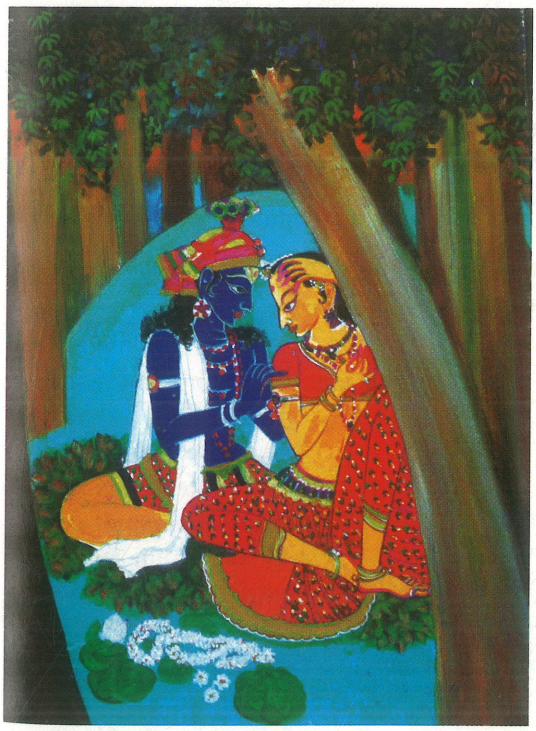
In India both line and the figure was canonized, adhering to certain principles of an 'Ideal' figure (as the Greeks did to their male human form that became athletic, in line with their wairing mentality). And much of this ideal figure – male or female – was canonized in the various parts of this vast country which at one time had only cultural unity. And it should not surprise anybody that the ideal figure had emerged not from any physical norms but from the rhythm of dance or from the grace of the gods – Vishnu, Krishna, Rama (on the male side) and Uma/ Parvati, Radha, Saraswati, Laxmi, etc. (on the female side) so there was the cloak of divine (which prevented the ideal from slipping into slop or vulgarity). In the entire range of temple sculpture and wall-paintings (in the caves of Ajanta and Ellora) the skill and grooming of the artists or artisans is clearly visible. There is no letting down of the guard. Therefore, all the medieval schools of art whether in the north or south, east or west followed the rigour of the sculpted (rhythmical) figure that sets aside the classical from the modern-western. It is this legacy that has endured. The artist in question here – V.S. Rahi – represents this enduring legacy and not the passing phases of the contemporary modern art.

One interesting thing about the artists of the early and mid-twentieth century is that these artists were rooted in their culture and had a good gen about Indian tradition both of the folk as well as at the religious level. They were conversant with the European art and its technique and learnt them to use in their own context. From this were born artists like Jamini Roy and Nandlal Bose in Bengal (the early romantics who took to going back to their roots and watering them with their modern sensibility and skills). V.S. Rahi belongs to that school who stuck to his cultural roots and made his work look Indian. Yes, like today's

artists, he did not care to join Western modernism or the latter day "Mainstream" art. On the contrary, he concentrated on making his line more lyrical and his figures and context more cultural and therefore more close to the people (and endearing at the same time).

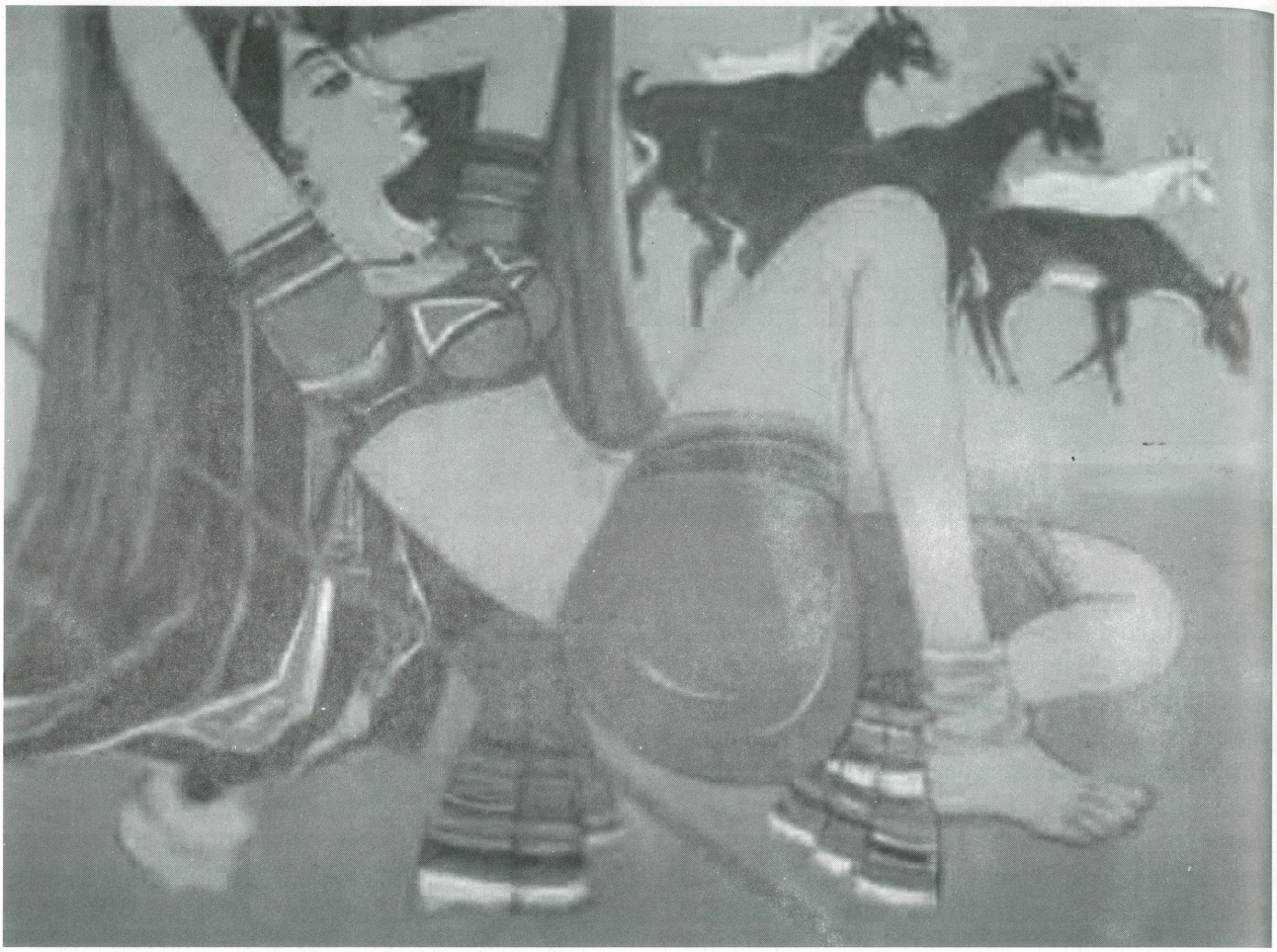
To see the proof of the above statement of this writer, one has only to look at the Indian females Rahi has painted in her natural social or family context. The female as a member of the village level Indian family



(with her child in her lap or playing around and she, even when in company, looking caring and involved. Or as an individual when she is bathing or donning her make up, with a mirror held before her face by her left hand. Or as a romantic heroine, talking to the parrot in her hand. Or as a socializing individual in the company of her female friends. Or as a wife who is reclining against a tree or pillow, thinking of her man (husband or lover) away in some distant land, as men always migrate to large urban centres in search of a living. Or the romantic images of Radha and Krishna that have always gone down well with the large part of our conservative society that doesn't approve of romancing outside the institution of marriage (and of course there is no romance in the ambit of marriage).

V.S. Rahi has painted, and painted well, scores of endearing canvases. His is a special slot in that annals of contemporary art and has maintained that status all along. The truth of the matter, is that he has not rushed into the market and has retained the stamp of the school he belongs to the school of the cultural-religious fabric.

So far V.S. Rahi's works have been published in a carefully curated book with a good window on his drawings as well. The book also show-cases his most coveted subject – the alluring, involved and un-conscious beauty with classical features – features that have been cannonised by the various Indian painting schools of the medieval times – the



Rajasthani Kalam the Pahari paintings, the Basholi School and several other sub-schools. The lyrical lines and the Ragatmak (engaging) colours that V.S. Rahi has mastered are for everyone to enjoy (and not just the expert).

V.S. Rahi had had his academic stint. But that is only referential. As an impressive artist of the cultural veneer he had already made his mark in the fifties and sixties and kept the mantle high till date. He actually does not need any introduction. His work speaks (and strongly so) and takes you back to an era wherein visual and performing arts were rooted in our socio-religious culture. Of late he had been working on the sculptural drawings and paintings based on the classical Ajanta style – the style which celebrated beauty, grace and sex as part of an integrated personal life. No inhibitions and no regrets. No moral or religious taboos. The rare and stark human freedom to live and enjoy life. That is V.S. Rahi for you. Unveiled and unrestrictedly enjoyable.

V.S. Rahi has frequently exhibited his works with his fellow artists, mostly of All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society (AIFACS) of which he is a long standing member. He has also won several honours and commendations.

His works are in prestigious art collections in the country and abroad. ■

R.S. Yadav is a senior Delhi based art critic, poet and writer.

Subhajit Sen

Words, All Those Words

This is not time to stuff ears
with all hollow words
This is time to be enriched
with all those words
That indeed sooths ears
with music of solitude
That indeed is an undeserving gift

Eternally perfect-
Those words hardly depend upon imperfect lips
To be delivered and be imparted
Even an artist fights in desperation
To find those words of Enlightenment
And being deprived of it minstrellous candour
Takes to carnal pleasure

Even in his verse
Saju couldn't grapple with those words

Dissolved in the mystery of this universe
Our lifecycle ends in struggle to realize.
And to let it be realized
Very mystical,
I cautiously sidesteps those words
And submit myself unto its mercy. ■

Quest

Indeed, I am not what I exactly am.

A caterpillar too knows
He is not what he appears to be
Spins thread into cocoon
and goes into trance in
In view of metamorphosing into butterfly.
The old brickwork plaster
longs for a new coat of paint
And to get a new look
the date calendar awaits a new year

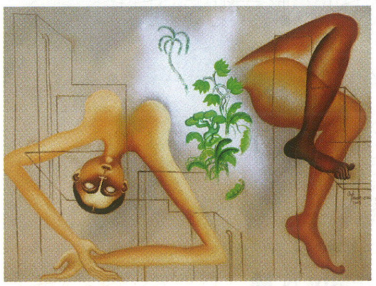
Even so
The little imperious Carnation
in the flower vase
Look askance at the immaculate Shefali
Brushing aside her distinguished landlady

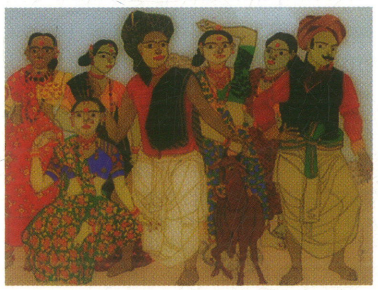
Get your potential divine force into action
Before your final collapse
As the clouds roar and break into lightning
Berore it descends on earth
in heavy downpour

The real freedom is
in the death of your unreal man.
No man is what he really is ■

Translated from the original in Bengali
by Sanjeev Kanjilal

Subhajit Sen is a young poet from Bengal.





Suruchi Saraf of Suruchi Art Gallery

ART GALLERY

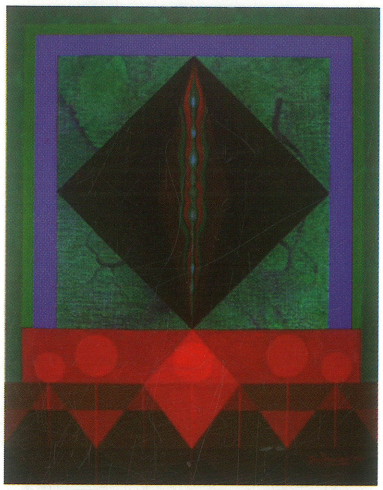
Subhra Mazumdar

SURUCHI ART GALLERY

When art does not scream its presence, then the right ingredients are generated for the making of remarkable art. At the SuruchiArt Gallery, located at Noida, contemporary art is nurtured by caring hands. Its owner, the soft spoken Suruchi Saraf, welcomes visitors into her premises with apparent shyness. But not for long, for as she engages her visitors in conversations about art and the specimens on her walls, a complete assurance creeps in. Before long, one is drawn into a serious discussion about how she personally feels about her art collection. 'Our aim at Suruchi Gallery is not just about the displaying the big names. Our criterion is the quality of the art and as such we frequently hold camps with younger artists where we do not bind the artist to this or that theme or medium. We don't constrain his creativity so that we create the right atmosphere where the artist can bring out his best. Then the colour palette, the brush strokes, the concept comes into play and art flows.'

Although the journey of this art gallery had begun in January 2007, with an inaugural show titled 'In Frames' where it had featured the works of twenty-four of the current masters the pulse of the gallery began to throb with the very next showing in an entirely different format. The graphic medium had reigned supreme and sent out a clear signal to the city's art lovers that Suruchi Gallery was an address where one would encounter art with a difference. Individual expression, rather than the

signature below the work, became its strength and was followed by a show exhibiting the works of young artists from Delhi's College of Art. Upcoming voices in the art sphere had unfolded their creative expressions defining contemporary issues in an art vocabulary entirely their own. Their distinct visual language made a delightful mélange of quality art and the art concept of this gallery was fused with a strong streak of innovation coupled with refinement of detail.

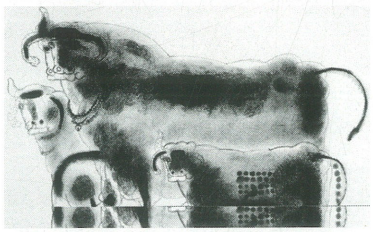


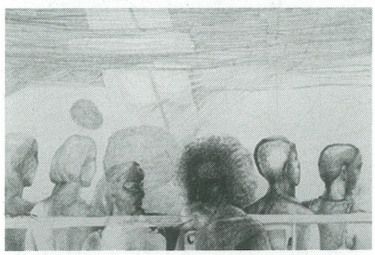
While any other gallery would have sat back on these laurels, for Suruchi this excellent start was just a lucky beginning. She needed to get into the art world with a personal level of involvement, for behind the image on the canvas was a persona which Suruchi was determined to relate to closely. In stepped her supportive parents offering her sound parental guidance and introducing Suruchi into discovering a whole new world of human interaction. 'You won't be able to understand a work unless you spend quality time with the artist himself,' her mother had instructed. Her father too, had added a corollary to this idea by stating: 'Create a platform for genuine artists so that you can relate to the painting.' Being collectors themselves, with a sizeable number of works by the master Shyamal Dutta Ray, Suruchi had imbibed the essentials of art technique and developed an eye for quality and an understanding of art techniques quite effortlessly, through this means.

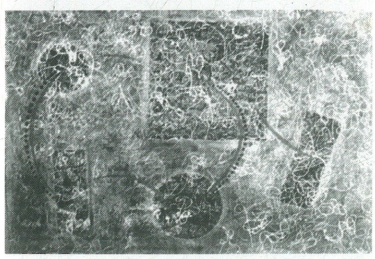
On her own account, Suruchi had always had a yen for things beautiful. That is what had led her to explore her talent at art and before long Suruchi had received acclaim as a self-taught painter, holding exhibitions at the India Habitat Centre, Delhi. ' It was at that time that I realized that there were several artists who had the talent and the spirit within them to offer genuine art to a discerning public, but what they lacked was a platform where their works would find acceptance. I was stirred from within and decided to come to their help and that is how Suruchi Gallery came into being. Thus I would say that it is the artists themselves who have played a major role in the success of the gallery and not me alone.'

That helping hand was not couched in charity. It was fired by her guiding principle of giving back to the art world by rising and doing 'better work.' Experimentations in art was what she sought after and determined not to get carried away by trends or commercial benefits, she began to pick up works that spelt improvisation, thereby giving artists a platform without boundaries . It resulted in an exhibition in August last year, when artists from leading art institutes of the country created works that reflected the socio-political and economic conditions and the existence of the individual artist amidst this setting. The internal and external forces that formed the composite nature of this unique world made for a vision with daring inputs, transporting the viewer into a world that was both familiar and yet intimidating.

Yes, it was time for the next big break at the gallery as visitors and buyers began to come calling at its doors. 'They were a mixed bag,'







says the young owner, 'and in my client dealings, I tried to know their minds, their tastes and why they were buying the art.' Such an exercise was no idle curiosity but the next stage in the learning curve for Suruchi. It provided her with valuable lessons about diversification to suit all manner of client preferences. ' I realized that not everyone looks at art from the point of view of technique. Several of them were attracted to the visual element in a work, and many a time colour was a scoring point.' Also, the inevitable question that was fielded was that about investment potential in a work and Suruchi offered sincere and foolproof advice in turn.' A good investment,' she noted, 'can be spotted even from among the younger artists. What one must look out for is the growth graph over a period of time. If the artist has been constantly innovating, his work is bound to appreciate. That is what we "categorise" as good investment.'

Unfazed by short-term fluctuations and talks of recession in art, Suruchi has been able to keep herself ahead of the times. Thus when other galleries began to roll down their shutters, Suruchi had remained buoyant, egged on by her inherent belief that there is an artist within each human being. 'As long as we keep growing with the artist and provide him emotive and material support and not just hold shows, the gallery and the artist will continue to grow.' With a multiplicity of fronts being opened to augment gallery development, she has even opened her doors to joint shows with artists from other Asian and European platforms. 'People did respond to those shows and remarked on their difference, making artists and viewers realize that art was not just about being Indian.'

Yet the going back to one's roots is not far to seek at her gallery. 'In future we plan to hold a show focusing on tribal art. That will be through a camp organized for these artists. We need to give those art creators a push because even senior masters in our country have acknowledged that they owe their painting techniques to these creators. Naturally Suruchi is proud to provide them with a platform also,' she surmises.

Through such a busy schedule of planning and execution, this young art aficionado has devised a lifestyle that is supportive of her work.' I have a two-year-old son Keshav to look after but in a joint family with a supportive mother-in-law, things have been taken care of smoothly. I also do *yoga* regularly and find it is beneficial as it strengthens mind and body and has given me a more open approach. It has improved my concentration powers. Otherwise the one diktat that I never veer away from is my regular habit of painting every day. That is my personal way of giving back to art what it has given me in such abundance.' ■

Subhra Mazumdar is a senior writer and art critic. She lives in Delhi.

Christopher Arkell

Poisoned Love

She, whom the very word love would poison
Until that poison distilled to love,
Cleanses herself with tears; all she'll prove
Is that they dry to salt what they first moisten. ■

For P.G. who gave me a book

First words, first blood to you;
These sheets, blushed by the stain
Of thoughts faltering like early rain
That spatters windows in a random slew;
Lie ready for the press
Of your translated form
To wake them, like the liquid, warm
Kiss that dawns on the lips you choose to bless.

What will they bear? What hints
Of secret couplings, marks
Of bodies contoured out of darks
And lights, selves chiaroscuro'd into tints?

And when they're used, bled on
By the unstoppable flow
Of our combining essences, know
This will survive, though our flesh be long gone.

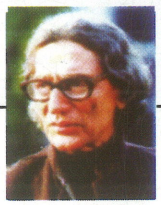
The map will show the route
From first to last; from city
Down to the rat-engendering port;
From field to market, and from lust to piety.

The body's moves make maps
From its desires, from threads
Weave yearning into webs, rear slopes
For eager climbing, sow valleys with seeds.

He'll meet her *en route,* cross
Where others can't, the borders
Plotted on maps to make the loss
Of fragile dreamlands on a dullard's orders. ■

Christopher Arkell is a poet and artist.

Sushil Vatsa



CRITICISM

Keshav Malik

Communing with the spirit of forms

Who is an artist? To whom does he address himself ? And what sort of speech is to be expected of him? Well, there is all kind of speech in the case of the painter, Sushil Vatsa, but one in variably of tenderness and musical intensity. Indeed the new work is suffused with the spirit of the dance of the human imaginations. The artist was surely, always a comprehensive soul, who knew the surrounding humanity by instinct, and cared for it. This, especially when he painted his myriad themes, the votive ones, or any others, he never looked down upon the earth beneath his feet. That is, he does not observe the world from on high, but is right down on the ground in complete empathy. This same stance cannot have been pursued in so many of the new works, has not the painter personally lived and breathed gentleness. It is thus come his abstracts : pictures of spiritual joy. By the very force of the logic of his soul, the artist is innerly benign.

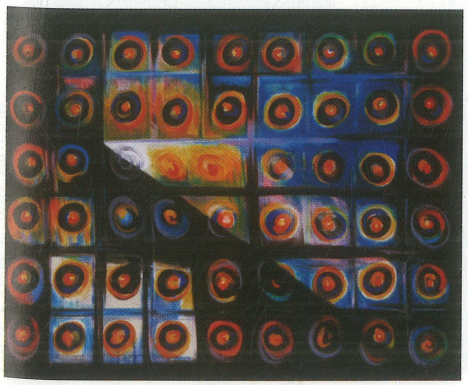
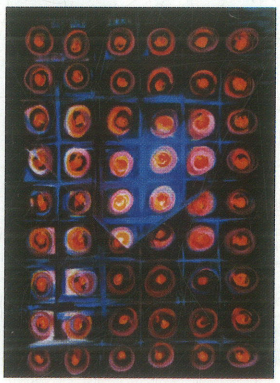
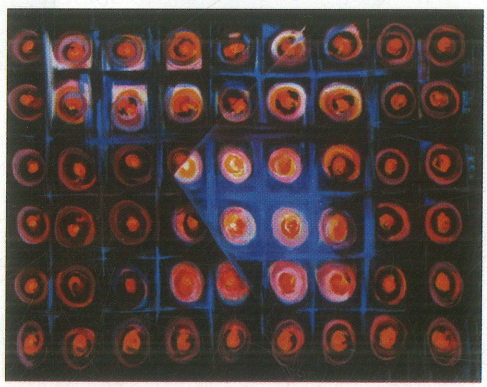
To all appearances Sushil is rooted in India's cultural heritages, and in its lovely liturgies and ceremonials, those ones is which the higher reaches of the spirit plays so serminal a role. Such upbringing gives many to the painter's new genre. As artist he closely observed and painted the subtle, if ephemeral, beauty of the human or natural form, and as such the light of a sacramental vision is seen steeped even in his abstract work as if in celebration and praise. His work is not designed to arouse the horrors of life but to sense beauty in the human as well as the divine.

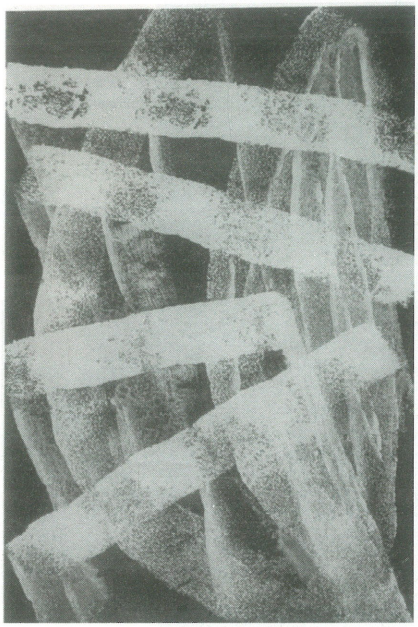
The reflection of beauty, then, would seem to be manifested in the body of his otherwise varied fresh compositions. Therefore he invariably tells

us something moving of our own true nature. His artistry is means to an end: to consecrate the warmth of forms; to plant through visual music the feeling of love amidst a long suffering world, and in which much of our lives are spent. Such is the landscape of this artist's soul. But this does not in the least imply that Sushil is sentimental. Oh no, he is cognizant of the latest new fangled art fashions, but yet to stick within the strait and narrow of the authentic and uplifting human emotions. The range of his colours is sober, and they express a chasteness, which only a few artists achieve. In his new works the quality of colour is secure. The strong strokes of the artist's brush highlight a good hand. His work, as an instinctive designer, surely invigorate his paintings. They are structured and not a vague colourism.

Formally, abstract, these works are in har monious arrangements, which turn back on themselves. This method enables the compositions to exist unassumingly in their individual grids. At moments the artist's personae are no other than states of mind, but at others they may be emphatic, symbols and signs. It may be that the painter wishes to recreate the aura of the artfully sacral and in veneration. Is this not how we sense the tenor of communion in his choice work.

The temperament of his genre is therefore relaxed and yet intense, complimentary with the overall aesthetic whose formal qualities are constantly enriched by the psychological or spiritual elements. Since both the designing and the emotional elements are well fused in it, it gains ample meaning. So, in one sense, the painter's art is essentially an expression of inner personal faith, strongly tinged with the higher of the life values. The painter is not pandering to the crowd and so come his stylistic hesitancies as betoken good breeding and much culture, in a cultureless period.



It is to the good that the painter has had the skill and sureness of what he really liked to paint, as though he has always had the tact not to shout out in loud garish colours. His brush work is sure but never brash. There are also those qualities, as that of the purity of the line. He depends keenly on rhythm as apart from structure. Sushil Vatsa is a modest-by-temperament painter, but still we do know that he invariably paints when the level of his spirit is high and that he has no awareness that the world is looking over his shoulder. He paints to please himself, as much, as to explore the recesses of his own mind, and in praise of life.

Hailing from Uttrakhand the painter touches us finally, with an Indian sensibility. Thus does his work gain considerably in his aesthetic finesse. And this sensibility is clearly experienced in his paper "Creative Process: A View."

All in all, here is an artist whose fresh, most achieved work touches us by its sincerity as well as unprententiousness. ■

Padmashri Kesav Malik is a renowned art critic, writer and poet. He lives in Delhi.

Sushil Vatsa with Husain

■ POEM ■

K. Srilata

THE NINTH MONTH: SPENT WAITING

'Inside me crouch two hungers'
and an ocean full of thirst.
My belly ripples
as an arm's imagined shape yawns
lazil y .
Sore, my womb wants to empty itself
impatient of that long heaviness.
'Put him down for a while'.
Three hours of restless,nightless heat
The skies forgetting to burst...

On my balcony a heavily pregnant monkey
balances gracefully
legs apart
waiting for nothing in particular. ■

CLASSROOM

And so these young bodies
sink into wooden hardness
three years of familiar lethargy
and occasional listening.
The chalk squeaks and breaks
unevenly.
Pink dust fills the air.
The asthmatic teacher wheezes
as the imposing blackboard
waits patiently for yet another
Revelation of Truth. ■

AGEING

A road forever twisted inside its own
narrowness
winding wickedly towards no end.
A girl sweeping the meaningless dust
wheezing all the while.
The monsoons mocking potholes
and city buffaloes overflowing in the sewerage.
In a small house with reluctant half windows
a formless ageing peers in the mirror. ■

IN IRAQ

In Iraq where there is no paper
Poets armed with pencil stubs write
on the back of bills they have preserved
inside their tattered wallets,
while some continents away
Others attempt gracelessly to form words
from computer screens on the blink
clinging desperately to a muse in retreat. ■

TAKING THE ATTITUDE OF FROGS

Poets like to retreat like frogs in a well
resting their notebooks and heads
in some mossy corner
except that ever so often life happens
outside the well.
Children, for instance, look in
dropping playful pebbles
that irritate as they echo.
And then again, even poets have to eat.
So squinting at the sun, they emerge
for breakfast, lunch, dinner
and work.

Poems ripen in the mind
falling like fruit
when it is time.
Taking the attitude of frogs
doesn't always help. ■

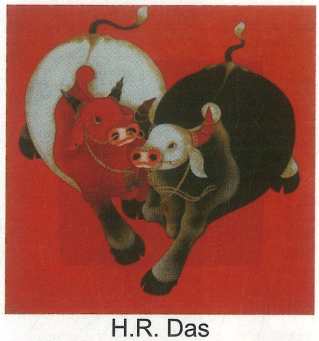
Courtesy : Panchbati Publications

K. Srilata is a poet, fiction writer, translator and Professor of Egnlish. She teaches Creative Writing and Literature at the IIT, Chennai

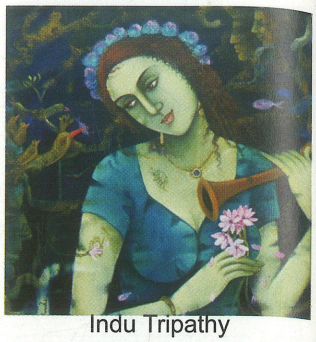
Sushil Vatsa with Husain

Amruth M. Sahu

Jiten Sahu



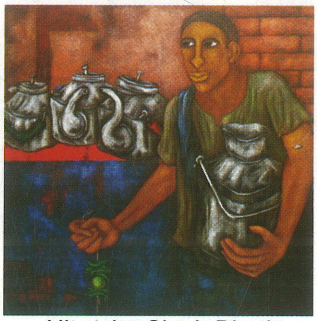
H.R. Das



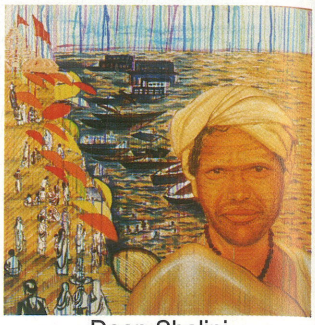
Indu Tripathy

Ashwani Prithviwasi

Ramchandra B. Pokale



Hitendra Singh Bhati



Deep Shalini

REVIEW

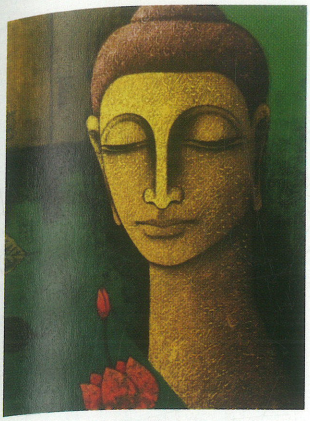
ART SHOW BY LAVANYA

Lavanya Art participated at India International Fair, Pragati Maidan (September 9-12, 2010) and Epicentre Art Mart, Apparel House, Gurgaon (September 10-12, 2010). The works of Amruth M. Sahu, Ashwani K.Prithviwasi, Darshan Sharma, Deep Shalini, G.C. Jena, H.R.Das, Hitendra Singh Bhati, J. P. Singh, Indu Tripathy, Jiten Sahu, Ramchandra B. Pokale and Siddharth P. Bettajewargi were displayed.

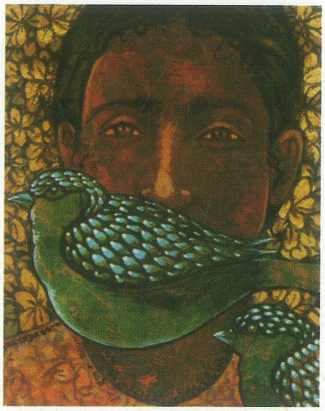
A solo show comprising works of Mrinmoy Barua were also exhibited in an independent stall.

Lavanya Art, which is an umbrella for both visual and performing art, promoted a good show within the limitation of space at the art marts. Amruth's works predominantly figurative highlighted on education. He showed how a child along with alphabets is introduced to the great citizens of our country. Ashwani's bold works captivated the viewer's attention. The bright colors used by him created extra enthusiasm and sensuality in them. Darshan Sharma's nude figures like Kamashutra expressed strong body language pushing one's imagination to physical ecstasy. Deepshalini's works were based on the roots of tradition. She showed how life moved ahead with celebrations. G.C. Jena's abstract works were based on life. The treatment of colors and creation of space were very catchy. His theme revolved around the mystery of being and becoming.

H.R. Das's bulls were very forceful. The brightly colored bulls were great visual delight. The viewers were very much tempted with the quality of his works. Hitendra Singh Bhati's were down to earth and focused the daily life of people. The struggle of the masses were very well exhibited with mature color skills. But Indu Tripathy's works did not highlight the bread earner's hard work. Her works



J. P. Singh



Sidharth B. Bettajewargi

G.C. Jena

Mriṅmoy Barua

were more of spiritual in nature. With good drawing and color sense and composition she displayed birds, flowers, music, tranquility, feelings for the creator as if it is her journey to the transdental world.

J.P. Singh's Buddha attracted people to Buddhism and the founder's weightage on peace and harmony in the society. J.P. had modest and direct approach to what he believes. Jiten Sahu's men and women flied in the sky carrying their home with them. His females were extra careful about their responsibilities. Jiten's colors touch the viewer's heart. Ramchandra Pokale's soft female figures, showed how life overflows with dreams, feelings, expectations. His created beauties were joy for the viewers. Siddharth P. Bettaje wargi's miniature paintings in mixed media on paper were very attractive. The birds, human figures painted by him were very prototype and lively. He has in depth study of flora and fauna and his drawings are of high quality.

Barua's abstract works on canvas were very bright and attractive. A great sense of colour application and top class space management were distinctly visible in Barua's works.

Lavanya Art has few other plans for future, where it will conduct few events based on performing arts.■

-CMT

Darshan Sharma

IN STEP WITH PARADISE

Rhythms to the poetry of Kashmir

Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor:

Have you, perchance, seen my love: O! Guls ?
Do please look for my beloved : O! Bulbuls
Looking for him amongst flowers
I did ask the daffodils-
Did my magician pass by here?
Do use the excuse of the riotous spring
Do steal in, love,
My garden will burst into bloom
When you come.

I kept on hoping
You would come-today,
Or tomorrow
This is the tale of my depleted youth.

Mahjoor, heartbroken, knows
When he says:
" The beloved had
No compassion for me."■

Translated by - Shantiveer Kaul

Odiesi dancer Sharon Lowen

Delineation of nature in its virgin state is Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor 's forte. He (1887-1952) is the most widely sung poet of Kashmir.

Bringing to life the beauty of Kashmiri poetry through the lyricism of classical Odissi dance was a challenge that I thoroughly enjoyed. Uma Vasudev's concept of drawing together performing art forms from all parts of India to interpret and share this evocative poetry for the entire country was inspired. I particularly welcome opportunities to choreograph for poetry in various Indian languages that harmonize with the aesthetics of any of the dance genres in which I perform: Odissi, Manipuri or Chhau. The theme of Nature through the Ages in Kashmiri poetry was especially poignant as this beautiful part of India has been less accessible to most of us because of the unfortunate strife at present in the Valley.

I approached the poem *Phoolon! Tumne yar mere ko to nahin deka?* by Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor in its Urdu version with the scent of the glorious flowers ofYusmarg, Gulmarg and Pahalgam invading my being. The sweet suffering of the heroine asking the flowers and nightingales if they had seen her beloved is a poetic device shared in poems of separation in every language. I chose to repeat most lines twice to allow each individual thought a chance to register for the viewer through expanded movement ideas. Pure dance passages in the movement language of Odissi were interspersed in the composition to develop the feelings of the lonely heroine surrounded by the intoxicating loveliness of the enchanting garden while she burns with the suffering of passion.

Setting this choreography in a real garden allowed me to connect the abstract stylized expression to the real. Dancing in the sun on uneven ground was problematic compared to performing on a stage in a theatre, but I loved the opportunity to explore new dance territory, literally and figuratively, in poetry, location and viewers. ■

Sharon Lowen is a renowned artist of Odissi.She received her training in Odissi from Padma Vibhushan Kelucharan Mohapatra, the undisputed master and architect of the contemporary Odissi repertoire. Sharon Lowen, although an American by birth, has now been considered as a dancer "who has shown with total conviction how dance is a language away and above any barrier of race and nationality." Her performances are spiritually rich and of a high aesthetic order, praised for grace and superb abhinaya.

Sharon has performed throughout India and the United States, Canada, Mexico, England, Kuwait, Dubai, South Africa, Malaysia, Singapore, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Poland, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Ukraine, and Japan. She has choreographed and performed Odissi dance in Telegu, Bengali, Malayalam, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Dogra, Kashmiri, as well as Sanskrit and Oriya for performances and festivals around the country and for Doordarshan and international television channels.

Sharon has received several awards and honors. In addition of Odissi, Sharon is trained in Manipuri Dance, Mayurbhanj and Serialkella Chhau and is the founder of Mansa. Centre for Art Without From tiers.

Courtesy : Uma Vasudev and Shubhi Publications

"In step with paradise - Rhythms to the Poetry of Kashmir" is a book edited by Uma Vasudev and published by Shubhi Publications.

Odissi dancer Sharon Lowen

Space & Vision-006, Acrylic on Canvas, 18"x18"

S-10, Acrylic on Canvas, 12"x12"

PROFILE

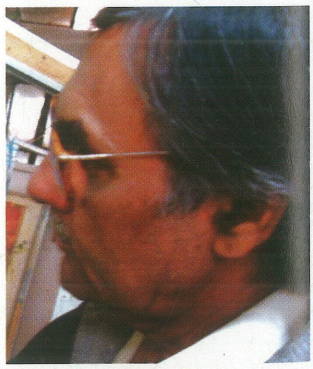
R.S.Yadav

VIGYAN VRAT:

A Journey to Self - Discovery

I met Vigyan Vrat when he had already conquered the podium - the arena of sonorous poetry, recited to large audiences in open *Pandal's* or large halls (a tradition of the fast withdrawing age of recitations of sonorous poetry, popularly called *Kavi Sammelans)* After giving more than two decades to poetry, Vigyan Vrat was now turning to visual poetry, which he saw in the large spaces in the old monuments around him - monuments that had impressed him since his boyhood days. High ceilings, large and deserted halls, long corridors, waiting to be walked in by occasional / curious visitors. The domineering images grew in his mind and he produced his first painting serial based on these monuments. That was in the year 1999 when I met him in his new incarnation.

I was impressed with his line of work. Few artists had tackled spaces. So he was virtually on the virgin soil, breaking it to lay down a path to the Disney Land of art. It was an audacious act for sure and needed patience to sustain - patience which he had enough, a trait he had acquired in the highly contested field of Hindi poetry.



Vigyan Vrat

Vigyan gave me two of his recent poetry collections - a feat few Hindi poets were able to perform. These collections gave me an idea of his mental rhythm. It was positive and forward looking. I therefore, became assured that he will make it to the altar, where this wedding between art and poetry could be blessed by the divine hand (as indeed it was). Vigyan Vrat fulfilled the promise which he

Space & Vision-007, Acrylic on Canvas, 30"x30"

displayed during his first show at the Lalit Kala Akademi in 1999 and in his subsequent exhibitions in the various galleries in the Capital as well as outside.

During the transition period Vigyan Vrat shifted to the highly contested urban spaces with their high-rise and low-ceilings suitors. The soulless spaces that waited to be humanized. But it was still hard to receive accolades. His imagery was developing but a brand was still lodged somewhere in the future. And it is always difficult to enter the hall of fame without a brand. Spatial realism in his work was too stark to create admirers. It was therefore, time to introduce new visual and aesthetic elements. In other words, time to humanize urban spaces.

Vigyan Vrat's 2008 and 2009 shows at London & Bombay achieved this goal. A lurking human presence in his works was achieved though somewhat weirdly. But this strengthened the message Vigyan Vrat was trying to convey – that urban spaces are a cold entity unless humanized by persistent human effort.

Vigyan Vrat's 2008 show at Studio Vasant, Hauz Khas Village, New Delhi, was a real milestone in his work while his theme remained constant – urban spaces and the human factor. Variations in colour orchestration were noticeable as were the compositional thrusts. The two dimensions that lent a new life to the old theme. And more forcefully too! But it was a time when Vigyan Vrat was facing his publisher who was pressing him to compile one or more collections of his poems. The old links were claiming their own niche in his life. Not surprisingly therefore two more collections of his poems "Chup Ki Awaz" and "Tab Tak Hoon" appeared in 2008 and 2009, respectively. The poet commented :

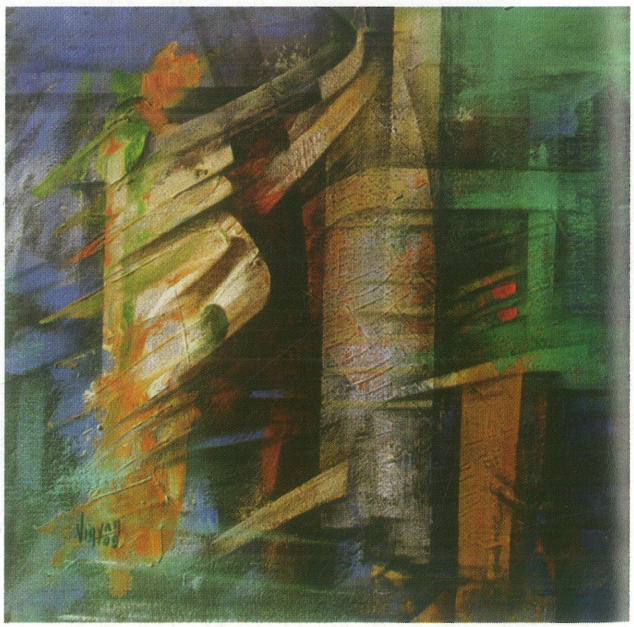
Mark this:

"I'm in the dock
But prosecutors refuse to proceed."
Or
"I've been searching for myself -
And got lost in the way."
Or
"You might have varied destinations
But do keep returning to the roots."
Or
"My thoughts are a rebellion against the self.
No need to search for a reason."

But it is a typical of Vigyan Vrat that he does not mix up the two diverse facets of his creative life - the facets that unite in him but in reality are quite apart. However there is no talking of Vigyan without talking of his poetry and his personal philosophy. He is not an old foggy, but very much with his own times, facing his trials and tribulations in a manly way. ■

R.S. Yadav is a Delhi based senior art critic, poet and writer.

Space & Vision-S1, Acrylic on Canvas, 15"x15"



Space & Vision-S2, Acrylic on Canvas, 17"x17"

ART CRITICISM

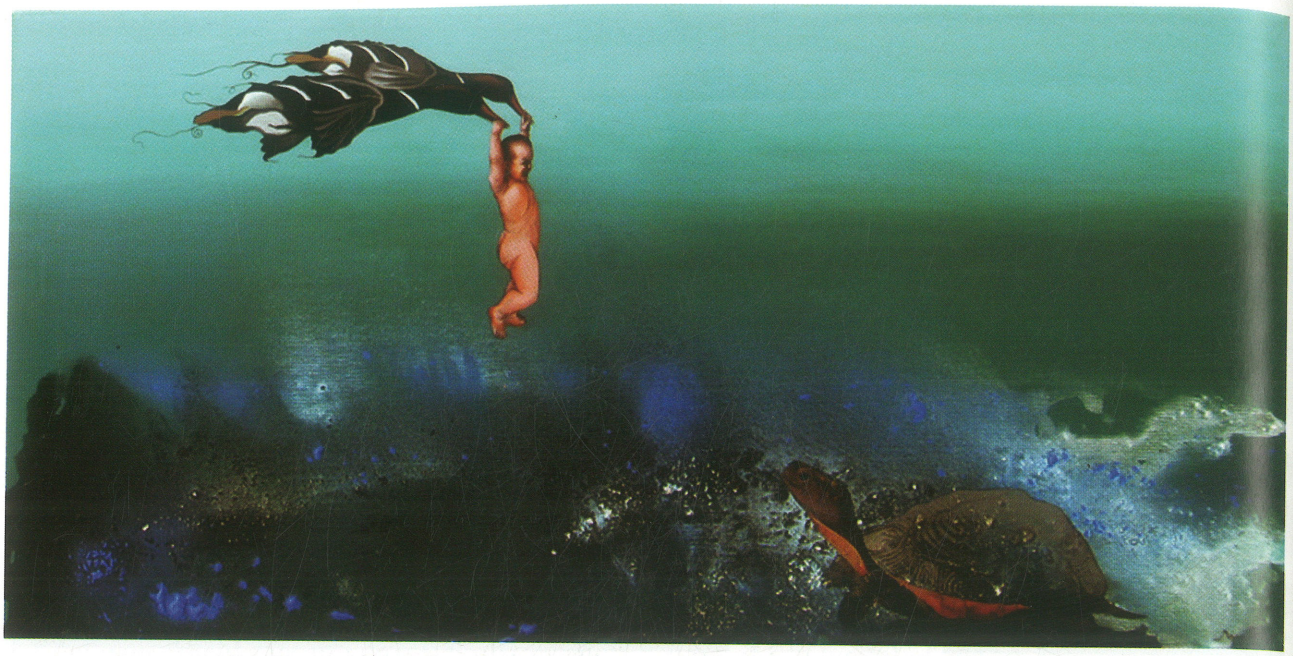
Kasturi Ray

Deft Strokes from Reality to Fantasy

His canvas has been home to his thoughts, narratives, imaginations, fantasies and realities for nearly two decades now. One who has dabbled in versatile genres in his paintings, and dexterously at that, Anup Kumar Chand has been a revelation as much as his creations. His paintings vouch for his creative and aesthetic individualism portrayed through realistic and post realistic, conscious and sub-conscious elements.

A journey that took shape from the traditional jhotis, murujas and clay idols at his home in Bhograi of Balasore district has taken wings to higher realms of painting. It was initially his mother who inspired him but before he realised there were many other elements of the universe that shaped his sensibilities. And by the time Chand was in his 20s, he had discovered the sincere observationist in him, holding grip over sensitive elements, even in the commonest of things.

Anup Kumar Chand



A Ph D in visual art from Indira Kala Sangeet Vishwavidyalaya, Khairagarh, Chhatisgarh, Chand has traversed a long way since he was first hooked to the B K college of Art and Craft, Bhubaneswar in his teenage. After completing a five year degree in Fine Arts, he moved to Khairagarh for M F A and then there was no looking back. Chand has researched folk art forms of coastal Orissa and his paintings have a strong influence of the folk painting and patta paintings of his home state. It is only in cotemporary art, that the motifs are put against the layers of modernity, explains the artist. It was during his stint at Khairagarh that Chand explored the many facets of paintings from experience, from moving out to places to learn and imbibe and by adding newer dimensions to his creations that soon found place at various exhibitions and displays.

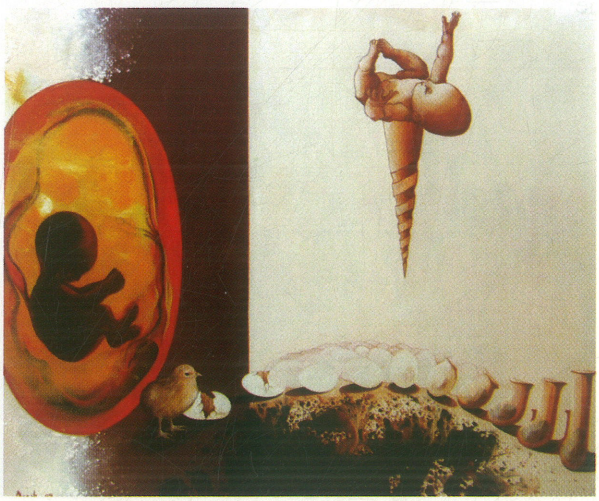
''My paintings are figurative, imagistic, iconic and compositional. I get my spaces filled up creating the other spaces collaborating with the parenthetic. They are conceptual celebrating the true happenings within my surroundings,'' says the avid painter who has many creations to his credit which have found a pride of place at Tata Steel Ltd, Jamshedpur, National Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi, Governor House, Government of Chhattisgarh, Orissa Lalit Kala Akademi, Bhubaneswar Department of culture, Goverrnment of Chhattisgarh, South central zone cultural center, Nagpur, Bhilai steel plant, Bhilai, Rabindra Mandap, Bhubaneswar, HUDCO, New Delhi, Youth welfare board, Goverrnment of Orissa.

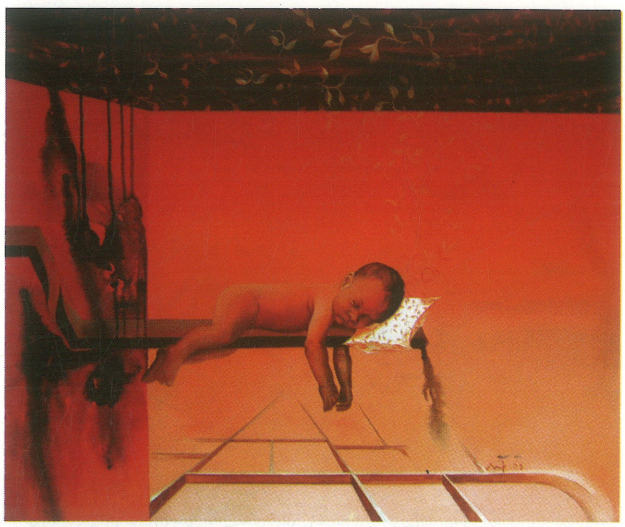
''I prefer my hands to be called as the artistic slaves of my mind. But honestly I am not addicted to art. I have always tried to maintain a creative individualism in my paintings and aesthetic individualism too,'' adds Chand. And true to his statements, his latest series 'Kidding in Dreamland' proves his point. Human figures, especially babies or kids form the background of this series. A major inspiration of this series, the artist admits, is his four-year-old son Pinak who intrigues the artist with many of his child-like fantasies. In most of his paintings in the series, the form covers space naturally and elements are found drawn in a rhythmic pattern. The colour pallette in his creations, most often are vibrant but the effect translates into something very soothing to the eyes. Even the colours used on the elements mingles with the background in a smooth transition. Since the series is based on child psychology in the present day context it provokes the viewers' aesthetic and intellectual faculties. The most appealing are those that stand out because of a high textured 3-D effect that is created with the tricky use of colour on the canvas. Many paintings come alive due to the oil colour images on the acrylic colour background and there are places where the brush strokes play with the

imagination and there are others where pencil renders the desired beauty to the painting.

The best thing about the paintings is they ooze spontaneity and playfulness. While some of the pieces explain the desire of the child to fly high, one sees a winged dog which also brings out the inherent aim of every individual to soar. Some portray the child's joy ride on a bird while another piece shows a child taking the help of a bird's beak to fly along. There are some where a child is seen taking a trip round the space on a wire and enjoying communicating with birds, there are others where a child flies with wings attached to his body. Striking are the images and imageries where infants' journeys into the eternal world come alive. Dragonflies, bees, butterflies, swan, and other birds form the background in many of the paintings. And all these brilliantly painted fantasy-oriented masterpieces makes the audience stop and take notice.

Similarly his earlier series 'Spaces in transition' are a body of works that find parallels in surreal transformations adapting to the engaging moment of change. As Jenson Anto puts it, ''Instead of depicting the stark reality of the situation the artist treats subjects in a surreal phase of regenerating forms. In a simulation of handling the inevitable, a cheetah stands in contemplation of pace that has crept into the present state of developing technologies. Chand's works gives momentum to changes in the environment that have been on the receiving end due to rampant commercialisation and exploitation of visible land.'' He explains how each element in the landscape endeared to grow with the work in progress.

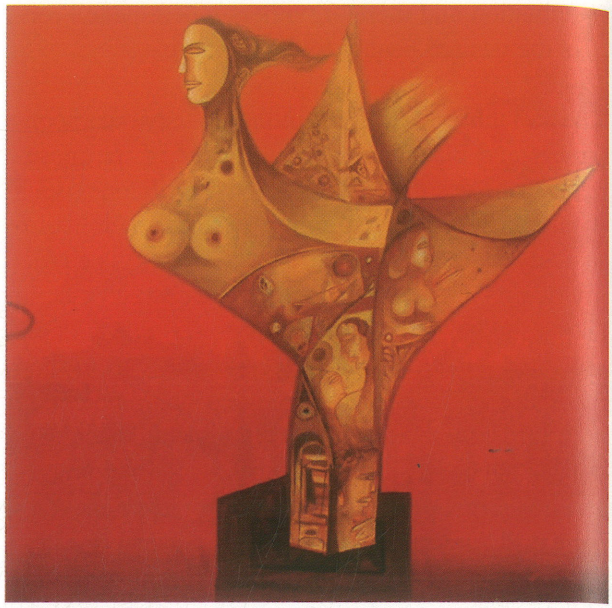




Instead of depicting the stark reality of the situation the artist treats subjects in a surreal phase of regenerating forms. 'My work of art is futuristic keeping contemporary in mind too''. Animal and insects motifs find a place in most of his creations while traits and frailties with human figure too form a major base. With use of a primary palette, the artist further emphasizes association with the land. Abundant use of red, yellow, browns and blues do find a contemporary shade in the whites keeping up with contemporary handling of colour in the paintings of Chand.

Awards and fellowships have followed the artist. He has been the recepient of Junior Research Fellowship by University Grants Commission, India, Junior Fellowship by Department of culture, Government of India, Chhattisgarh and MP State Award, All India Award, South Central Zone Cultural Center, Nagpur and State youth Award, Government of Orissa. With five one-man exhibitions so far, Chand has been an integral part of many group exhibitions all over the country and beyond. ■

The writer is Deputy News Editor (Features) of The Indian Express, Bhubaneswar. She has been associated with the national daily for the past 14 years.



PROFILE

Subhra Mazumdar

JITEN SAHU

Resurrecting bits of the past is an old man's indulgence one would surmise, but for artist Jiten Sahu, these recollections are a vital energy source that have powered his imagination and taken birth in the form of imaginative creations on canvas. With a wide repertoire of places and things to choose from, as Sahu has travelled from his native Bastar to places as far removed as Mathura, Bhubaneshwar, Mysore, Mumbai, to name a few, his works are piled high with imaginative richness. Then, when he settled into the urban milieu of Delhi, the hankering for his home life and its unique environment began to take a new turn. 'Painting became more than just recollections of the environment. It meant adopting one's own system and remaining abreast of movements, sharpening the inquisitive approach and learning to understand the charm of a localized attachment,' is his conclusion.

Having grounded his thoughts into realizing that painting meant a space for mental freedom, Sahu, at the outset, chose not to tie himself down to any one gallery. He also became an active participant at art camps where he interacted with senior and junior artists and enjoyed a shared companionship. It also became a time when he was able to move beyond native shores for art shows abroad and group participation became a valuable tool for his growth of concepts and influences. In short, Sahu had formulated a directional

Jiten Sahu

approach to his art and this reflected itself in phases of artistic output that were drastically different and explorative in comparison to the earlier phase. It also meant that he took on himself to deviate from the strict regimen of paint brush and easel and even took up the pen for examining his creative reach. 'When I was staying in Mathura, I even began editing and distributing a quarterly journal on art and literature titled '*Kala ke Bahaaney*'. It was popular while it lasted.

In his current avatar as an artist Sahu has been concentrating his output on the female form to be the medium to express his innermost thoughts. 'In my experience it is the woman who has undergone a complete change in her understanding of herself, since 1995. I have noticed this change personally in my own home surroundings, where a dominant male paternal influence has gradually been diluted to one that understands the needs of the womenfolk.' Hence the new woman that Sahu sees on his canvas is the persona who has an identity of her own but is still rooted to her cultural bindings. These bindings are depicted symbolically in his art by such inclusions as the tulsi plant in the courtyard, as the symbol of her grounded focus despite her apparent liberation. The container within which the plant flourished is the surroundings, relationships and she is happy remaining connected with it.

The many moods of womankind on the other hand have not gone unnoticed in his art. The backdrop of his artworks are the astute pointers that reflect her moods Their sombre tones are a reflection of the deep thoughts in her mind. Her fantasies on the other hand are a riot of sparkling colours and unlinked forms suggesting that there are no limits to one's imagination. The use of a strong blue patina in some of the works convey the internal feel of the individual, where the cool depths of one's thoughts are entombed and out of sight. The sculptural format of the main figure, affixed to this meaningful background is consciously

sculptural and in metallic hues, so that her every mood is complimented by a corresponding colour effect.

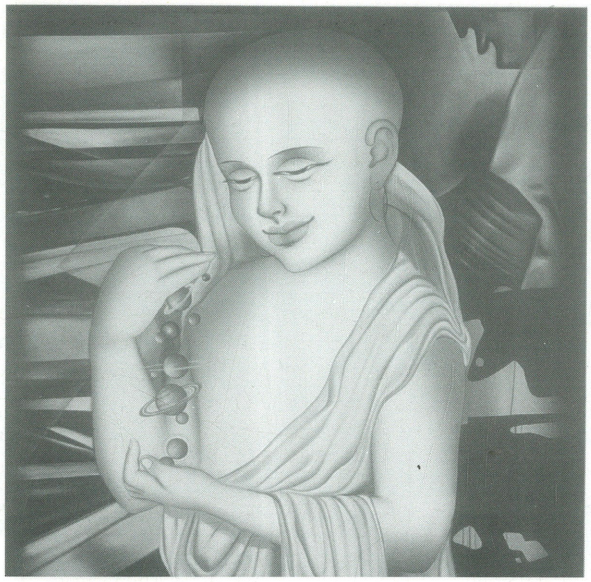
With so much to convey, it is in the fitness of things that Sahu should opt for a larger canvas space for his art. That is why he revels in creating giant works of which the smallest range is around eight to ten feet. The large spread is a way of bringing to the fore the force of his message as every symbol must be given adequate space. And then, after all the meaningful messages have been given their due importance, there is the need for a clean surface to bring forth its protagonist, the woman inn his art. 'My art is not related to messaging alone. It is also to play with the form and since form is the foremost thing, I need the space to play with it,' he analyses with flawless logicality.

The colour applications follow the dictates of his art rather than the lessons of an art class. ' There is not much thought given to the rules, besides keeping in mind the basic treatments of red, green, blue and their minglings. Contrast sometimes becomes a telling force in them as when the red backdrop becomes a depiction of the masculine domineering worlds and the green a smooth crossover into woman power. The balance of the colours in these works depicts the crucial requirement of balance in order to maintain the equilibrium of all life. But of course, the artist has his licence to state: 'As long as leaves r are green and the waters are blue, there will always be the tendency to deviate and create from these rigid patterns.'

Of late therefore, the tendency to take his woman figure out of the cloistered setting of the small towen or village to the larger metropolis has resulted in an entirely new set of works by the artist. Ever since 2008, cityscapes have become a part of the woman . In the current period there has been a further refinement of this theme so that the material form of buildings, structures and linear spaces as seen in a city have become blurred and the woman too, has acquired a distinct contour of a bird form, although she retains her intrinsic form. 'This is not a conscious change of my own volition' adds the artist, 'but a part of my growing process.' With assimilation and then recreation individually being the personal stamp on each of Sahu's works it is not difficult to understand this tendency. That is why for Jiten Sahu art is not a static form that is meticulously perfected with each passing year. It is a way of expressing one's own growth in terms of imagination understanding, feeling, the tools that make an art work into a message from the artist's heart. ■

Subhra Mazumdar is a senior writer and art critic. She lives in Delhi.

Sanjay Bhattacharyya, Oil on Canvas, 60"x60"



Dharmendra Rathod, Oil on Canvas, 48"x48"

ART REVIEW

Renu Rana

DEVOTED TO ART

Bajaj Capital Art House, having branched out from a financial institution into the art world and making a success of that as well. At the helm of it is Anu Bajaj, replete with business acumen and passion for art. The success of the art fund started by them, prodded them to establish an art gallery as well. Thus, Art Positive saw the light of day. It soon moved from its premises in Kalka Ji, to the hub of art…in Lado Sarai., where it grandly stands, shadowing others in its wake.

A visit to the art gallery is a pleasurable experience. Smell of fresh coffee welcomes you…..well, yes, the gallery has a warm café serving freshly brewed coffee with tea cakes and quiches and other mouth watering delicacies. The salivating mouth can please take a backseat, we see an array of books displayed on the book racks. The relaxed and creative milieu makes the guest comfortable, welcomed and makes them discard the preconceived notion of an art gallery being a formal experience, taking them on a visually ecstatic tour of the colourful paintings lined on the spacious walls. One glance and you know only an experienced curator could have put up this brilliant exhibition. Sushma Bahl presented her understanding of selecting artists and

Gagan Vig, Bronze, 25"x22"x22"

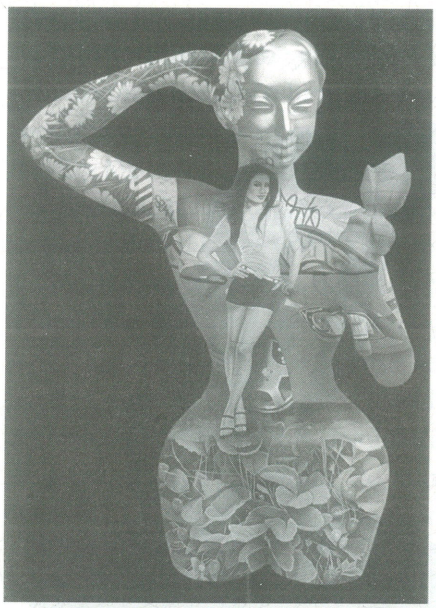
Satish Gupta, Oil on Canvas, 36"x36"

Seema Kohli, Mixed Media on Canvas, 36"x36"

their art works.

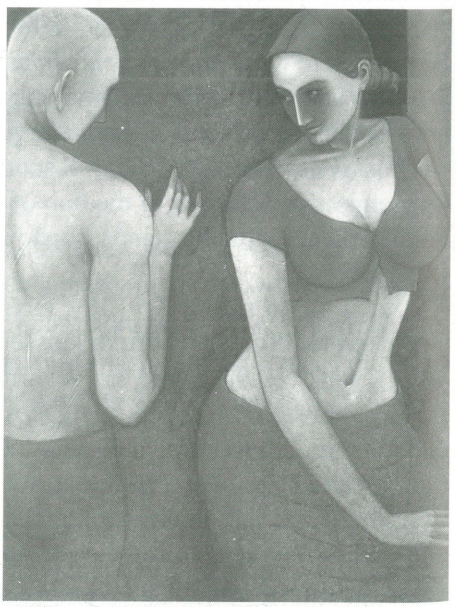
`It is the fifth annual show organised by BCAH, reluctant to disengage from their consistent theme of "Devotion". The visual space was shared by the established artists and the young, the devotion being spiritual, carnal, and professional, encompassing a large realm. 27 artists participated and their works were varied, yet united in the theme of devotion. Some works were a direct reference to religious devotion while others conveyed it through metaphorical symbols. The common thread, however, was devotion, from a different viewpoint and in a modern framework.

Arpana Caur, Satish Gupta, Shuvaprasanna, Sudip Roy, Sanatan Dinda and Dharmendra Rathore's works are meditative portraits, igniting your spiritual quest. They represent the commonly understood aspect of devotion where the recipient of our devotion is a godly figure. The above mentioned artists must have felt the divine awakening sometime in their life in order to come up with the intense spiritual element in their works. Jayasri Burman, in her typical style,



Venkat Bothsa, Fiber, Glass and Enamel Colour, 40" hight

Sidharth, Natural Pigment and Silver Leaf, 60"x36"



Ashit Kumar Patnaik, Acrylic and Oil on Camvas, 48"x36"

Surya Prapash, Oil on Canvas, 36"x48"

Sudip Roy, Oil on Canvas, 48"x48"

uses traditional motif and figures, whereas Puja bahri and Seema ghurayya use linear and chromatic abstraction to portray the same feeling. So we can safely say that it is not what you see, but what you understand of an art work that really matters. Sometimes we read and feel so much more in simple lines and colours where figurative representation may fail. Shobha Broota, in the simple imagery and uncluttered chromatic arrangement, convey with straight lines, what many artists would strive to do with a varied palette, but lesser command on composition. The comparison may seem foolishly unjustified too, considering her illustrious oeuvre of work. Seema Kohli's knowledge of lithography sneaks up in most of her works. Over the years she has mastered the art of mixed media on canvas. The work on display at this show may not be the best of Seema's work. Empty spaces may be considered irreverent in some art forms. The entire pictorial space is used up, leaving no visual respite.

Each canvas tells the same story, the language is different. What we hear may differ too, and what we then understand may be completely diverse. If it takes an artist extraordinary talent on the part of an artist to tell a story visually, it takes great understanding on the part of the viewer to decode the narration. Nature is widely worshipped in India and devotion to it manifests in many forms. Surya Prakash's untitled work depicts nature in abundance, what with weeds, shrubs, trees vying for space. The tranquillity is condensed by the small, furious strokes that add a kind of urgency and restlessness to the work. Sidharth's Ganga takes in so much within and without her. The symbolic depiction of what we have done to our sacred river is thought provoking.

The exhibition tries to include dedication in most manifestations. The chemistry between the man and the woman in Asit Patnaik's work overflows out through the canvas. No touch, no spoken word could have made a better impact. It is devotion between the man and the woman; between the artist and the art. Longing and anguish are so well depicted in bronze wo ks of Rajendra Mishra. Sheela Chamaria's bronze piece titled 'vatsalya', roughly translate as maternal love, portrays a mother's unconditional love for her child. She is unfazed in her affection and attention and if that is not devotion, then we need to redefine the term.

In totality it was the most aesthetic and poignant exhibition put together, giving a different perspective to the consistent theme. Not to overlook that it absolutely complimented the new milieu.■

Renu Rana is Delhi based art critic, sculptor and curator.

Mahasweta Devi

Dr. Ashok K. Choudhury

"VOICE" TO "VOICELESS" OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Among the women prose writers who have made a major contribution to the 20th century Bengali literature are Ashapurna Devi, Mahasweta Devi, Moitreyi Devi, and Lila Majumdar. Mahasweta Devi, or *didi,* as tribes and Harijanas address her, is a prolific and best-selling author in Bengali of short fiction and novels. She is, perhaps, among the most feted writers in the world today, who fights against class, caste and gender based oppression. The focus of her work is different from the contemporary fiction, as she writes with a mission who revolves around the travails and triumphs of the urban middle class. Her down to earth description of events and characters, which structured in the circle of the rich and poor, the oppressor and the oppressed, simple innocence and cultured opportunism, has set her apart among writers. Her writings are recognized for giving "voices to the voiceless section of the Indian society".

Though she is a creator of exemplary and powerful women characters, but Mahasweta asserts that her text is part of the discourse of class rather than gender. Her works are, often, based up on meticulous research, conducted sometimes via unconventional means, such as oral history, into the history of the peoples she writes about. Exposing the exploitation and domination in the post colonial state her writings are different from the literature of diasporic nostalgia for the place left behind. She was inspired by the 16th century poet of Bengal, Kankan Mukundaram Chakraborthy, who gave Mahasweta an insight into the life of the common man, and his work *Chandika Panahali* remains a source of inspiration for her even now.

In her own words, "Mukundaram awakened my interest in the common people who later became a part of my life. Now I can write about the tribes from first-hand knowledge. That the tribal world remains unexplored is a loss to literature". Thus, for cause of tribes and marginalized communities with a single-minded devotion, she has brought out the rebellious spirit of the tortured people in modern Indian life through the figures and narratives of the tribal people of India: the Kheria Sabaras of Purulia, the Lodhas of Medinipur, and bonded laborers of Palamau and several others. K. Satchidanandan, a poet-critic, says, "Mahasweta writes her fiction only after thorough historical research reflects her commitment to the reality-effect of her writing. Her representations in some sense embody modalities of negotiation between factual and fictive events". Her creative works, however, are characterized by a flair for authentic documentation of the spirit and passions of the time without any touch of sentimental romanticism.

Lamenting the lack of sensitivity amongst the sophisticated and well placed in the society towards the contribution of tribes and their present predicament, Mahasweta says, "A creative writer should have a social consciousness... a duty towards society. He or she has to be totally committed to the problems and miseries of the people and should make an attempt to focus them in the right earnest and, as far as possible". She was not a social activist by design but when she was extensively travelling in the tribal villages she reacted to their miserable plight. Life, as she knows through her close contact with the indigent class, is hard, cruel and merciless. In her introduction to *Agnigarva* (The Womb of Fire, 1979) she writes, "in these thirty-one years after

independence, I have not seen our people attaining true independence in anything - in food, water, land, loan or bonded labor. A pure, white and sun silk rage against the system that has made this independence impossible is the inspiration behind all my work. I believe that all parties, right or left, have failed to keep their promises to the common people. I have no hopes of this conviction being shaken during my lifetime. Thus I have written only about humanity to the best of my ability so that I do not have to feel ashamed to face myself".

Regarded as a 'committed' writer, her trenchant, powerful, satiric fiction has won her several awards and honors including Amrita Puraskar (1968), Bharati Sangha Award, Vartika Puraskar, Bhubaneswari Medal, Lila Award of Calcutta University (1978), Sahitya Akademi Award (1979), Sharat Chandra Chattopadhyay Memorial Medal of Calcutta University (1978), Tarashankar Smriti Parishad Puraskar (1977), Medal from Nikhil Bharat Banga Sahitya Sammelan (1981), Shefalika Gold Medal of Sahitya Parishad, Jagattarini Gold Medal of Calcutta University (1989), Bhuban Mohini Dasi Medal of Calcutta University (1983), Bibhuti Bhushan Smriti Samsad Award (1990), Roman Magsaysay Award (1996), and the Jnanpith (1997). Mahasweta was also conferred 'Padma Shri' in 1986 by Government of India for her social work in the tribal areas of the three neighboring states of West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, especially in the districts of Medinipur, Purulia, Singhbhum and Mayurbhanj. Mahasweta selected Indira Gandhi Award for National Integration (2004), which was conferred on 31 October 2005. The Government of India awarded her 'Padma Vibhushan' (2006), the highest civilian award of the country, for her writing as well as for her activism for tribal welfare and the rural dispossessed. In 2004, she also awarded the French *Legion de Honour,* created in May 19, 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, given by the French Republic for outstanding service to France, regardless of the social status or nationality of the recipients, in recognition of the cultural diversity in France and India.

Besides, she was one among the fourteen contenders from twelve different countries for the 3rd Man Booker International Prize (2009). Very recently, in March 2010, she has been selected for MTR National Literary Award for the lifetime achievement in creative writing, exposing the cause of marginalized sections, including dalits and tribes. Mahasweta, though, has received many an accolade for her works, the *Legion de Honour,* which she received from Dominique Guard, Ambassador of France to India, on behalf of the French government, came as one of the important feather to her cap. Receiving the award Mahasweta said, "at 78 it does not really matter whether one gets any special award or not, but an honour offers inspiration. Earlier I had received the Akademi Award and then Magsaysay Award. Now it is *Legion de Honour* - the biggest one. Some of my short stories are also being translated into French. Two years ago my *Hajar Chaurashir Ma* was translated into French. Now it is a collection of short stories".

Mahasweta, a woman of untiring energy, was born on 14 January 1926 in Dhaka in a family of artistic achievers – her father Manish Ghatak, a Kallol generation novelist and poet; mother Dharitri Devi, a writer and a devoted social worker; Ritwik Ghatak, her paternal uncle, her father's younger brother, a film director; her mother's elder brother Sachin Choudhuri the founder editor of *Economic and Political Weekly;* and another maternal uncle, Sankho Choudhuri, a well known sculptor. She grew up in an environment of art and literature, and was influenced by her early association with Gananatya, a group that attempted to bring social and political theatre to rural villages in Bengal. She might have shaped into as the inheritor of some family tradition in literature, painting or filmmaking but she chose to be her own self. A self made woman of letters, she ventured into the area of social activism, which had not been attempted by any family member before. She is the first woman from her family to have discovered the human territory known as Indian tribes.

Mahasweta admits that writing was something,

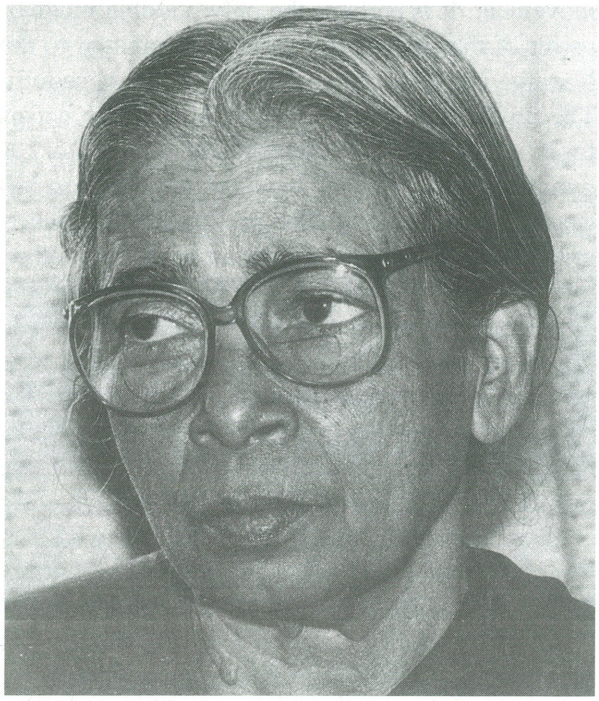
which was natural to her, and as she grew up literature became part of her life. She goes on to say, "I write whenever I get time, especially when I am under pressure. Sometimes I go to remote places to enrich my experiences and capture the life of people in my writing. I go on writing to the best of my abilities about the people, so that I can face myself without any guilt or shame". Her work, both social and literary, for the bonded laborers has won her admirers everywhere. Mahasweta started her literary career under the pen-name Sumitra Devi at the very tender age of thirteen in a popular weekly of those days, *Sachitra Bharat*. Her work *Rabindranather Chhelebela* appeared in the juvenile journal, *Rangamashal,* when she was in class VIII. In this phase, at the request of Sagarmoy Ghosh, the legendary editor of *Desh,* who was a friend of her first husband, Bijan Bhattacharya, she had written two romantic stories 'Padmini' and 'Jashowanti'.

Over the years, she had to her credit, more than a hundred works of fiction, fifteen collections of short stories, a collection of plays, books for children, primarily in her native language, Bengali, one socio-economic survey on bonded labor in Hindi entitled *Bharat mein Bandhua Majdoor,* and thirty textbooks in Bengali for school students. She has edited three books including *Jim Corbett Omnibus* in Bengali. The Library of Congress has in its collection 68 titles by her including translations and 4 titles on her work.

However, *Jhansir Rani* (The Queen of Jhansi), Mahasweta's first major work, serialized in *Desh,* dedicated to memory of Govindram Chintamani Tambe, the nephew of Jhansi Rani, a meticulously researched fictional reconstruction of life of the warrior queen Laxmibai, who fought for her rights on horse-back in the battlefield against the British Army bent on annexing her little kingdom, and died fighting, came out in 1956. It was followed the next year by a novel *Nati,* her first novel, *also* published in *Desh* in 1957 and thereafter *Ki Basante ki Sarate*, a collection of short stories, in 1958. In her 'Preface' to *Jhansir Rani* Mahasweta writes, "when I was a child my grandmother told me the story of Rani of Jhansi. Heard in her gentle voice by the dim light of a lantern, it did indeed seem like the most amazing fairy tale just like those times, the teller of that tale is gone, and the fairy tales went with her. But the tale of the Queen has remained bright in my mind ever since. Later, after I required an education and a consciousness of history, my curiosity about our national life increased and wish arose to write an entire book about Jhansi Queen".

Before writing the book she had done extensive research on the Indian War of Independence of 1857 and travelled to all those places—Banda, Gwalior, Hamidpur, Laltpur, Urcha - where Rani Jhasi fought with the British imperial power and gathered a lot from the oral tradition; recorded the folk songs in praise of Laxmibai and included those in the biography. The oral tradition is a vital source of Indian history. Mahasweta acknowledges that it ought to be preserved as a historical document. The book defies the categories: simultaneously a history, a biography, and a personal statement that says as much about the author as it does about her subject. It is a valuable contribution to the reclamation of history, and historiography, by feminist writers.

With the publication of *Hajar Chaurasir Ma* (Mother of 1084, 1974) Mahasweta shot into fame. Before published as an enlarged version as a book, it appeared in October 1973 in the special autumn



festival issue of *Prasad.* Here she turned to the Naxalite movement in West Bengal and departed from her historical and domestic writing. According to Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak, "all the novels of Mahasweta up to *Hajar Chaurasir Ma* remain within the excessively sentimental idiom of the

Bengali novel of the last twenty odd centuries". For the first time she showed her interest in the Naxalite movement. It is perhaps the only possible mode of revolt of the peasant community committed to the Naxalite cause. It became for her a true vocation. The novel created and continues to create waves for its unsentimental yet profoundly moving story of a mother's discovery of how and why her son lies dead in a police morgue. The story reveals the solitary grief of the protagonist, Sujata, an apolitical mother, who has been a witness to the horrifying situation during the suppression of the Naxalite uprising in which her son Brati, the corpse number 1084, took part and became a martyr. Keeping out of view the economic and social exploitation in rural Bengal that had drawn landless peasants and tribes to the Naxalite movement, she concentrates on the reactions of a cross-section of the survivors, both those who bear the scars and wounds of those horrible days, and those who had lived through the days of violence in simulated insularity. Later on *Hazar Chaurasir Ma* was dramatized and created a stir among the reader in and outside Bengal. Govind Nihalani, the famed director, has also made the book into a Hindi movie as 'Hazar Chaurasi ki Ma'.

With her deep insights and force of narration she sought the roots of the insurrectionary fervor of the revolutionaries of the seventies in their disillusion with the corrupt and insensitive existing system, both in the family and in the stage. With *Aranyer Adhikar* (Rights over the Forest, 1975), based on her usual in depth research work, Mahasweta established herself as one of the most powerful novelists in India. It is based on the life of Birsa Munda, the tribal leader, who asserts the tribal's claim to the ownership of the forest. "Here Mahasweta begins putting together a prose that is a collage of literary Bengali, street Bengali, bureaucratic Bengali, tribal Bengali, and the language of the tribes", says Gayatri Spivak *(In Other Worlds,* 1989).

Starting with the death of the Munda rebellion leader Birsa Munda in Ranchi on June 9, 1900, *Aranyer Adhikar* goes back to Birsa Munda's past life and the making of him as a leader. Based on historical document, she provides the backdrop of Birsa's rise as a leader through his associates Dhani Munda and Bharmi Munda who were also in jail with Birsa. "The thrill of the story with its tensed up characters with all their individualities and die-hard rebel's fight to the last make the novel a really tragic story where the failure of human effort becomes the springboard for further action with stronger thrust", says Ujjal Kumar Majumdar. The most important achievement of the novel is to uncover the real reason for the Munda insurrection. Her portrayal of the character of Birsa leads her to exploration of the origins of myth and religion. A new myth and a new faith are born among the Mundas

when they accept the godhead of Birsa and renounce their earlier faith. Mahasweta here portrays a primitive society in the process of change. For its intellectual quality, sense of history, freshness, powerful narration enriched with the raciness of local dialects and vivid revelation of inner life of these rustic folk, *Aranyer Adhikar* was accepted as a masterpiece of Indian fiction which won her Sahitya Akademi Award in 1979.

The same year, Jagat Shankhdhar translated *Aranyer Adhikar* into Hindi as *Jungle Ke Davedar.* Mahasweta in the 'Preface' writes that the inspiration for the novel came from a work by Kumar Suresh Singh, the noted social scientist and anthropologist. His book entitled *Dust Storm and Hanging Mist: Story of Birsa Munda and His Movements* narrates a detail account of the history, the socio-cultural and the political dimensions of the Munda movement during 1878 - 1901. Mahasweta acknowledges the influence of the text on her novel and dedicated *Aranyer Adiker* to Singh. In the 'Preface' in the revised edition of Singh's book, published under another title *Birsa Munda and His movement...* in 1983 he acknowledges his debt to Mahasweta for being instrumental in the publication of the revised edition.

In *Agnigarva* (The Womb of Fire, 1979) we come across the striking picture of the tribes and aboriginals who are depicted as rising in revolt in her latest phase of writing. She writes with fierce courage about those who have scarified their lives for the cause of greater social justice. It is a firsthand study of an historical situation. The novel is a scorching commentary of representation of armed struggle between East and West Pakistan in India, where deep rage and suffering seem to have cleansed vision and given a new glistening edge to her social criticism.

Her other notable works are *Amrita Sanchay, Andhar Manik, Subhoga Basanta, Noirite Megh, Ghare Phera, Kabi Bandyoghati Ganyir Jivan o Mrityu, Chotti Munda Ebong Bharatiya, Vivek Bidaypala, Ganesh Mahima, Eiter Pore Eit, Salngirar Dake,* etc. As a novelist, Mahasweta is at her most characteristic when she re-creates a span of history, allowing individuals to evolve their interactions with a historical process, as in her novels *Amrita Sanchay* and *Andarmanik,* "imagined into fiction" set in the period that saw the British colonization of India, and *Chotti Munda,* recording the first seven decades of the present century in the history of one of the tribes of eastern India. In *Kavi Bandyo Ghati Ganyir Man o Mrityu* she has portrayed the life of a young man hailing from the 'Chuad' tribe in the 16th century Bengali. The totem and taboos, inhibitions and mental reservations on the 'Chuad' community along with archetype myth form the backdrop of the fiction. We get a henchman, contemporary to Sri Chaitanya Dev, in *Vivek Viday Pala,* who tries to come up but has to accept an inglorious defeat.

In all her novels, she wields her pen for the downtrodden that try to come up in rebellion but meet either a violent death or an inglorious defeat, yet they are never vanquished. Her novels reveal two important facets of her social criticism - one is deep distrust of the privileged upper classes who are either directly taking part in the oppressive dynamics of Indian society, or living in ivory towers, preferring to ignore its ugly realities, in the other one she expresses her heartfelt respect for the uneducated poor villagers with their solid goodness, unquivering fortitude and backs that refuses to be broken by centuries of oppression.

Like her novels, her short stories, especially *Draupadi* and *Standayini,* speak of the plight of the poor. *Standayini* (Wet Nurses, 1979) narrates the tragic tale of a sweeper woman Jasoda, who acts as the foster mother of a landlord neglecting her own son. When she dies the landlord takes care

of her orphan son but the landlord's son, fed on the sweeper's milk, treats the orphan contemptuously. This is the price of her mother's milk. In *Draupadi,* Mahasweta is in her extremely provocative short fiction and political narrative. It has given an altogether new dimension to the theme of Draupadi, an example of the Indian sense of guilt and pain around the incident of the rape of Draupadi.

Draupadi, the protagonist, is an exceptionally beautiful Santhal woman actively engaged in the Naxalite movement. After a mass rape at the police station for hours, there has been no benevolent God to save her as He who saved Draupadi in the *Mahabharata.* At the end Draupadi rises above her humiliation and questions this world where man is free to exploit a woman and still call himself a man.

Besides, her most powerful stories 'Salt', 'Seed', 'The Witch' and 'little ones' are, in her own words, amongst the most important of her prolific writing career. All set in Palamau, the tribal intensive region, Mahasweta's works, written in the eighties, are resonant with anger against the exploitation she witnessed firsthand, and the complacent hypocrisy of the upper castes and classes. 'Jawl' is the story of a teacher, who is an honest and conscientious Congressite. In *Mw banam Lakinda,* the agitation of the agricultural laborers is led by the CPI, whereas in *Operation Bhasai Tudu,* the political activist, Kali Santra, belongs to the CPI (M) and above all stands somewhere beyond the Naxalites.

Unlike her earlier works - A*ranyer Adhikar* and *Hazaar Churasir Ma* where Mahasweta makes fiction out of history, in *Operation Bashai Tudu* she weaves a myth out of real life. She takes pains to document authentically the life she knows best. However, her highly acclaimed short story was *Rudali,* the concept which till recently was an unknown phenomenon. The story centers on the professional women mourners who are paid to lament and sing in praise of the dead, a custom still practiced in Bihar, Punjab, and Rajasthan and in some other states. It is the prostitutes and low caste women who perform this function in Bihar, and elsewhere. The Rudalis hail from a different social class. They could be housewife as is prevalent in Punjab. The widows who are otherwise not entitled to attain any sacred social ceremonies such as weddings, but as Rudali such women are welcome. Though it is a powerful women's story but Mahasweta asserts that her text is part of the discourse of class rather than gender. *Rudali* was adopted into a play and a film by Kalpana Lajmi, which bagged several national and international awards.

Bayer, however, presents a powerful tale of harsh reality of a woman's life in rural India. The protagonist, Chandidasi Gangadasi, a professional gravedigger, is put against a powerful exploitative mechanism that is in force in the rural world. Chandidasi, the innocent mother, who is branded as a witch, has been separated from her son and family and gets killed while averting a train accident. At the end her son acknowledges her as his mother by defying age-old feudal values. Besides, her *Chhoti Munda* and *Master Saabs* are the products of exploitation, and inhuman. Mahasweta chose slightly different forms, with songs and rituals and evocations providing a historical field for the action, in her short stories: *Aajir, Bayer, Urvashi o Johnny* and *Jal.* In *Aajir,* she deals with the decadent social values and their effects on the illiterate people in the rural areas. *Urvashi O Johnny,* a story set in the Emergency, tells about the love affair of Johnny and Urvashi a talking doll. Several stories by Mahasweta have been dramatized and performed by non-professional theatre groups, mostly in her own state, West Bengal, both in Bengali and Hindi. Many of her works have been translated into English and other Indian languages: Gujarati, Hindi, Malayalam, Marathi, Punjabi, Oriya, Kannada, and Telugu.

In addition to being a revered author, Mahasweta is a social activist who has supported the causes of tribal development and helped in the socio-economic betterment of the underprivileged class. She has presented a number of papers on labor and the tribes in seminars organized by the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Labor. Last year in Delhi at the Indian Habitat Centre, she spoke on the Words of Women Series, a series that features eminent women writers of the country who speak on issues close to their heart. In 'Meet the Author' program organized by Sahitya Akademi in 1991, she said, "women have to assert themselves. They have to break the shackles of male chauvinism and get

going to help make India brighter and prosperous". Her articles have appeared regularly in the *Economic and Political Weekly, Frontier* and other journals: *Anik, Anstup, Bartaman, Basumati, Business Standard, Desh, Jugantar, Satyajug,* and *Sunday.* In the late eighties she had been a weekly colomunist for *Bartoman,* a Bengali daily. During 1982-83 she was associated with the Bengali daily, *Yugantar.* She has been the editor of a Bengali quarterly *Bortika,* devoted to the tribes and marginalized people. Presently she is the Editor advisor for a newsletter *Budhan,* one of the many journals which attempt to offer a platform to the members of marginalized social group, published by the Denotified and Nomadic Tribes Rights Action Group. It is named after Budhan Sabar who was brutally killed in March 1998.

Her writing is not confined only to the suffering tribes, the most downtrodden in the Indian society. She has provided active support to all efforts directed towards the uplift of the poor and needy, especially among the tribal people. Previously she had involved herself in the struggles of municipal workers of her hometown Berhampur and initiated the 'Bonded Labour Liberation Organization' in Palamau district of south Bihar and neighboring districts in West Bengal. Mahasweta has been spearheading the movement against the industrial policy of the West Bengal government, her state domicile. She stridently criticized confiscation of large tracts of fertile agricultural land from farmers and ceding the land to industrial house at throughway prices. Her lead resulted in a number of intellectuals, writers and theatre workers join in protesting the controversial policy and particularly its implementation in Singur and Nandigram.

Besides, she is the President, West Bengal Kheria-Shabar Kalyan Samiti, devoted to the welfare of Lodha Sabar and Kheria Sabar, the tribes of Medinipur and Purulia. She is also the President, Tribal Unity Forum. This apart, she is associated with many tribal organizations - Dalitjan Mukti Sangathan; Paschim Banga Munda Samaj; Paschim Banga Bhumij Kalyan Samiti; and Paschim Banga Sahis Jati Kalyan Samiti. Her connection and involvement with so many different organizations bring her face to face with varied lifestyles, and problems of different communities. She uses her experience to great effect in her writing. Totally committed to their cause, she has donated the entire Prize money of Magsaysay and Jnanpith to the organizations she has set up for the tribes.

Mahasweta has travelled extensively in the forest regions and remote villages to collect information about peoples' sufferings, political pressures, exploitations by the moneylenders, their protest against the deforestation and she writes about all these plights. She has travelled not only in rural Bihar, Orissa and Bengal but also abroad. In 1985 she visited France through the Cultural Exchange Program of Government of India; England in 1986; America in 1968 on invitation of the Marxist Study Circle of Pittsburg University. She also visited eight Universities of America as a Distinguished Fulbright Lecturer in 1990. She was in France for a short while to participate in a Writers' Conference along with some other Indian writers in 2004. Mahasweta made an impassioned inaugural speech at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2006, when India was the first country to be the Fair's second time guest nation, wherein she moved the audience to tears with her lines taken

from the famous film song by Raj Kapoor: "This is true the age where *Joota* (Shoe) is *Japani* (Japanese), *Patloon* (Pant) is *Englistani* (British), the *Topi* (Hat) is *Roosi* (Russian), but the *Dil* (Heart) is always Hindustani (Indian)... my country, torn, tattered, proud, beautiful, hot, humid, cold, sandy, shinning India. My country..."

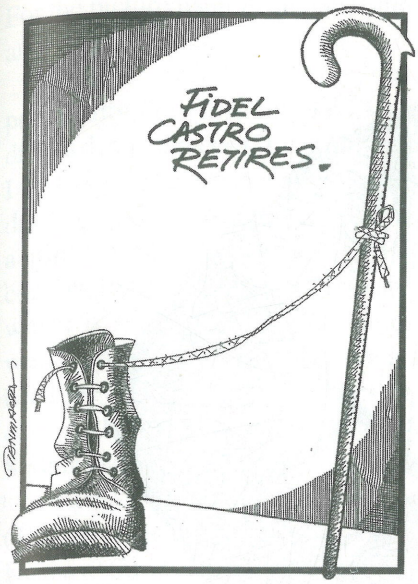
Such a rare writer was born when the national movement was at its height. Her first schooling was in Dhaka, but she moved to West Bengal in India after Partition. After schooling at the Eden Monastery and Midnapur Mission School, Mahasweta passed her matriculation from Beltala School, Kolkata in 1942. After seventeen years of her graduation in English Honours from Shantiniketan, the brainchild of Rabindranath, obtained her Master's degree in English literature from Calcutta University

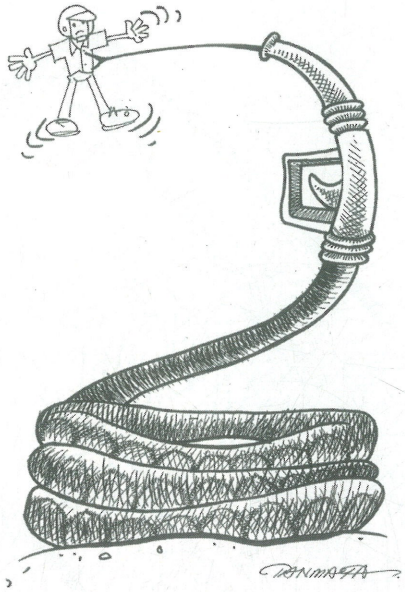
in 1963. Even as a student of the Intermediate class she joined Girls Students Association and took active part in the relief work for the victims of the Bengal famine of 1943. During her graduation, the country was passing through great political uprising and change. The Tehbaga Movement was at its heights and soon the communal riots broke out in Kolkata. She married Bijon Bhattacharya, the veteran actor, playwright, and the founder member of IPTA in 1947. After a brief stint as an English teacher in the girls' section of the Padma Pukur Boys School, Mahasweta joined the postal department as UDC in 1950. She was sacked a year later on suspicion of communist activities.

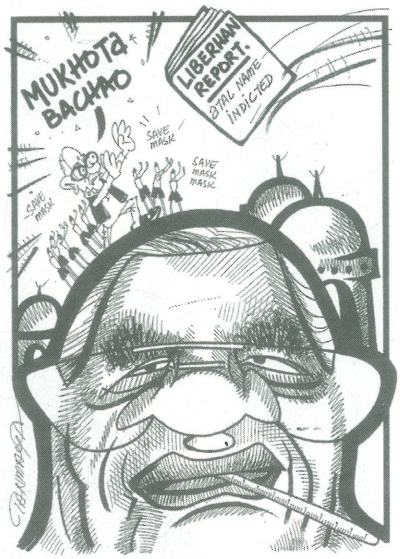
She has tried her hand at several odd jobs including selling soap dyes and exporting monkeys to United States. In 1957, she joined Sir Ramesh Mitra Girls High School as an English teacher. Her first marriage lasted for 18 years. She divorced Bijon Bhatacharya in 1962 and got married a second time to writer Ashit Gupta in 1965 but led a barren life till she began working with the tribes. After her Master's degree she took up teaching job as lecturer in Bijoygarh Jyotish Ray College, in 1964, an institution for working class women students. She resigned in 1984 when she received a call to serve the suffering humanity at large.

Her rich and diverse experience of life comes from many different quarters: her career as a teacher, brief stint in the office of the Deputy Accountant General of the Post and Telegraph, her editorial assignments, her close encounters with the rural reality in the capacity of a travelling village reporter of *Yugantar.* In fact, she was a witness to several people's movements before she became a writer. All these factors shaped her cultured personality and terrific creativity. Later on she spent the better part of her life studying and working among the bonded and landless laborers, the exploited tribal communities' languishing in ignorance and apathy. She writes, in the 'Preface' to *Shrestha Galpa,* " I t is my conviction that a story writer should be motivated by a sense of history... I have found authentic documentation to be the best medium of protest against injustice". Presently Mahasweta is reworking on her autobiography, and rewriting parts of the *Mahabharata,* giving it a tribal twist. She also plans to resume work on her autobiography. In response to a question, what you would like to do for the rest of your life, she replies, "fight for the tribes, downtrodden, underprivileged and write creatively if and when I find time. A lot of work needs to be done to improve the plight of the dispossessed and the downtrodden . . ." who has spent most of her life projecting the plight of the tribes and promoting their legitimate rights. ■

Dr. Ashok K. Choudhuary, a literary and post doctoral scholar is with Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi







CARTOON

Tanmaya

PENNING THE PENCIL

How did I start as a political cartoonist? It takes me back to the days 1 was struggling'. It was not fire in my belly but fire in my kitchen that impelled me to become a political cartoonist.

I am a disciple of my father Late Shri Hari Prakash Tyagi (artist), then Triveni Kala Sangam (1990-93) and finally attended the College of Art, Delhi (1995-99). I had been an illustrator since 1990 and a theatre artist with Act One since 1994. Later, I did street theatre with civil society group Sahmat (Safdar Hashmi Memorial Trust). This juggling helped me sharpen both my craft and content - subconsciously. So political cartooning became a conscious culmination of my satirical creativity.

The style I have fallen in love with is black-and-white cartooning. Colouring the piece is merely out of market pressure, kind of dumbing -down to make it "understandable" for the tie-clad MBAs.

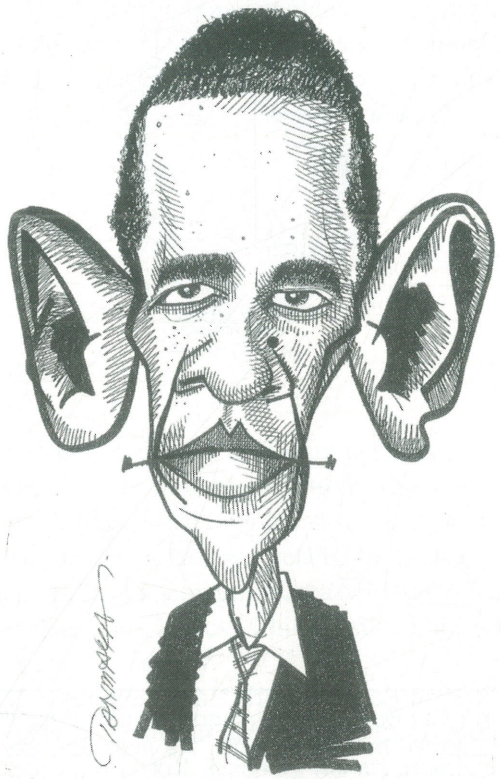
Every morning I start with the conceptualization of a cartoon. I try to be crisp with little use of words.

For the picture itself is the idea, and I try to be simple and straight.

At the craft level, if it's a caricature of a personality then it should be identifiable instantly. I draw a detailed piece if the idea so demands, otherwise I try to keep the composition simple. After all, a good drawing should never overpower the idea. Basically, a picture should be the correct blend of line, composition, caricature, details and, finally the idea, which is supreme. One old-school cartooning style which I have adopted is to draw a newspaper with a headline in the left corner. It is easy and simple to convey the message suing this style, as my favorite Sudhir Dar would do.

Also, seeing works of the masters -like Irfaan (Jansatta), Rajinder Dhorpadhekar (Hindustan), Keshav, Surendar (The Hindu), Michael Ramirez (Investors Business Daily, US), Martin Rawson (Guardian, UK) Rajendra Puri (Statesman) and caricatures of Hadimani (The Week), Sebastian Kruger (Germany) and Bhatlaker (Illustrated Weekly) -has been a treat to my eyes and mind, and has helped me to evolve.

Ajit Ninan has repeatedly warned that political cartooning is a dying art in india, but 1 beg to disagree. A cartoonist evolves gradually, he has to first qualify



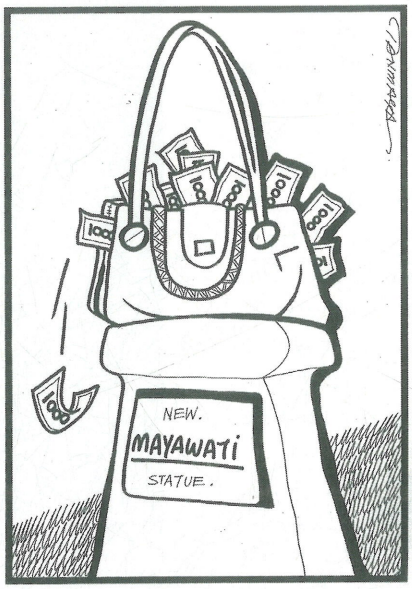
in variety of skills first self discipline than good drawing, sense of composition, caricature drawing catching clear and simpler expressions, following current affairs a clear political understanding. And on top of it mixing Humor with help of all these skills in the picture. All these skills take time to evolve and mature then finally culminate in a picture. So making of a quality cartoonist naturally becomes a slow but steady process.

The College of Art, Delhi, where I studied, has produced numerous brilliant painters, sculptors, graphic designers and illustrators in its sixty years of history. But 1 am perhaps the only political cartoonist after Shekhar Gurera.

Emergence of R.Prasad (Mail Today) and Satish Acharya (Mid Day) are good example of the steadypace of political cartoonists. So this art is not dying. It is growing slowly and steadily. And still if this art is dying then there is something seriously ill in our democracy.

However, this art is definitely endangered by the emergence of another art called the "encroachment art" - encroachment of the space of the cartoonist by the tie-clad MBAs of the Market.

The editors, cartoonists and MBAs have to sit together and seriously think about how a high art of a newspaper has become an alternative art of the publications. Today, only The Statesman, The Hindu and Mail Today are giving good space to the cartoonists. Why?

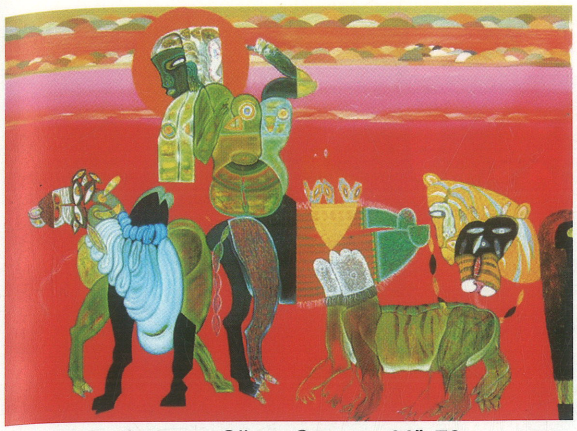


On the contrary, cartoonists are more relevant in today's time because their art connects straight with the common people of the country. On the other hand, modern practitioners of painting, sculpture, video and new media arts have failed considerably in mass dissemination, as simple people find their art difficult to understand.

But cartoonists have for so many years communicated the problems, dilemmas and frustrations of the people of the country, and for this I am proud of my cartoonist fraternity. They have survived comfortably, though without making Hathi, Ghora, and Nari, unlike my painter friends.

In conclusion, in today's context, when a cricketer and not a soldier standing at the border of the country in considered a brave hero, when twenty five years of wait itself becomes injustice to the people of Bhopal gas treagedy, leave the final verdict. And when Inquilab - the revolution means a cellphone ad. cartoonist's work becomes a very important document of our times. ■

Tanamya has worked as a cartoonist with a number of leading media houses in India. He lives and works in Delhi .



Journey, Oil on Canvas, 96"x72

Blind Players and Golden Ground, Oil on Canvas, 108"x72"

CRITICISM

Vikash Nand Kumar

Contemporaneity with traditional quintessence

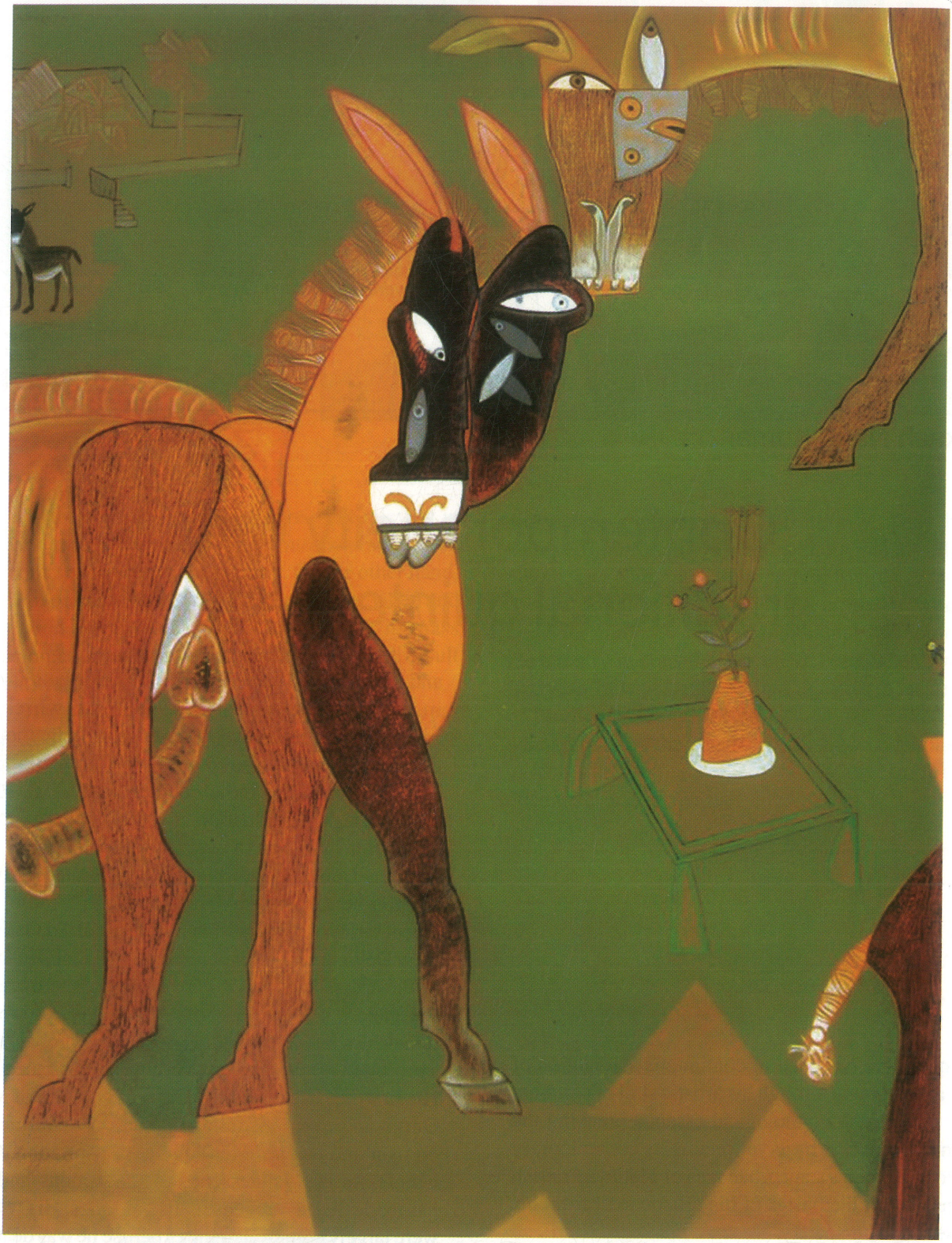
Ram Dongre

Ram Dongre has been in continuous association of self and supreme through his artistic skill of painting. His work has a mythological essence breaking the monotones urban haze yet retains its contemporary flavour. Born in a semi urban area of Madhya Pradesh he has learnt the basics of his artistic skill from his father and the society.

After completing his primary education he moved to a relatively urban area within the region and brushed on his skill. Keeping his art practice alive and assuming his career as an artist he got admission in to the Khairagarh Art College which is comparatively unknown art college in India though the college has nurtured few well known artists contributing to the Indian contemporary art. Ram completed his graduation in 2005 and then post graduation in fine arts from the same college in 2007.

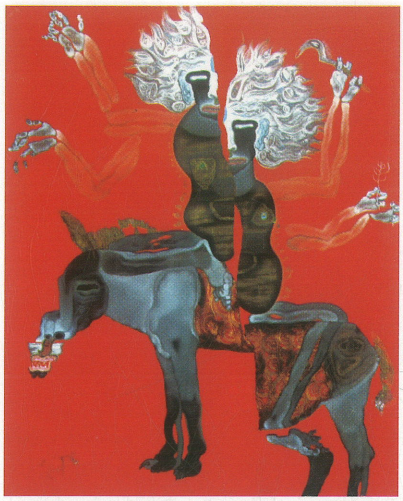
Ram Dongre's works portray the interpersonal relation between the creations and the creator. His recent series of works displayed at Visual Art Gallery, New Delhi gives the indication of a surrealistic view of the artist. The works were engaging the focus of the gaze upon the uncommon representation of female divinity. He genuinely excels by propagating a profound significance concerning the human spirit. His first foray into art was with the sculpture of Maa Durga and ever since the gods and their influence on mankind has been his source of inspiration. Our beliefs are the quintessence of our actions and he has made that so obvious in his paintings. His works were largely come out of the expertise he was dealing with during his childhood.

The contemporary approach through the depiction of religious iconographic is noteworthy. The subject



Green Ground, Oil on Canvas, 48"x36"

My Power, Oil on Canvas, 48"x60"



Kalratri, Oil on Canvas, 48"x60"

Maa Gouri, Oil on Canvas, 48"x60"

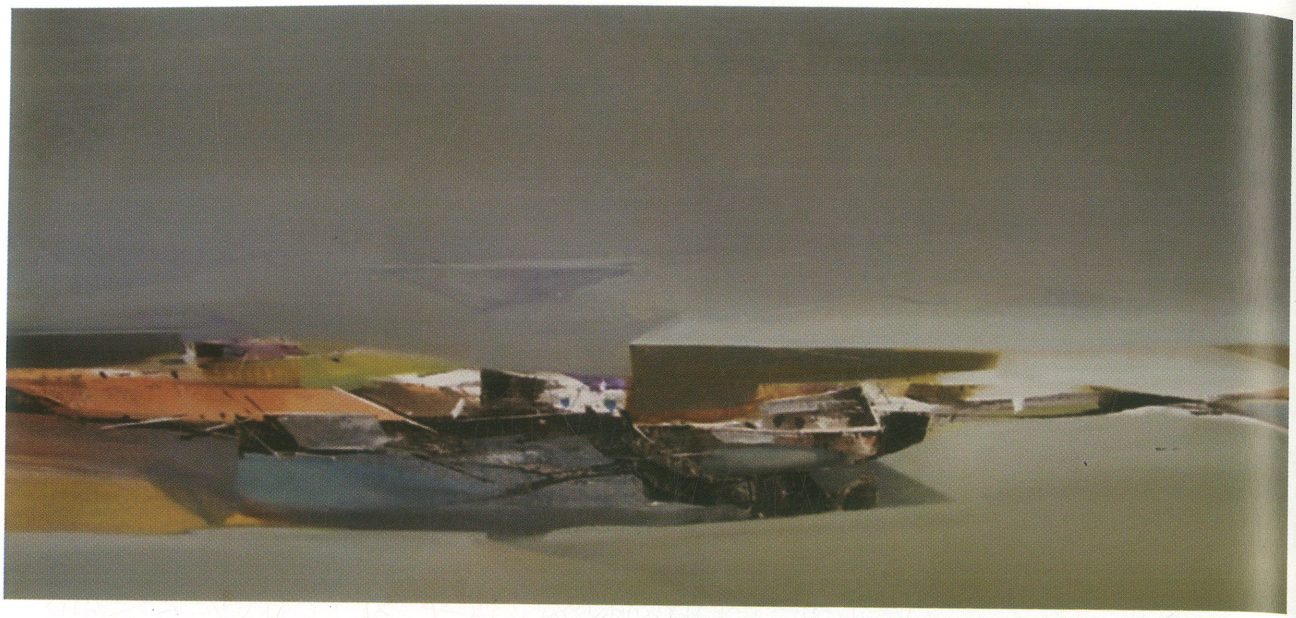
and the theme of the works always hover in the subconscious mind of the artist. He feels exalted after giving them a silhouette on to the canvas. His verbal metaphors make a reference to what was existent and pertinent in Indian tradition. His work combines adroit knowledge of the mythology and sympathetic knowledge of nature within the magical liberty of his artistic creation. On a closer inspection there is playful intelligence of the characters situated within a brightly organized world.

Though careful, juxtaposition and distortion of varying morphed images and their placing with pictorial spaces, Dongre almost create macabre events. Like all myths, in his works there is an interface and interact between gods, humans and other natural beings and more important a sense of vital force that causes birth, growth, youth, age, decay, death and regeneration.

But what is more substantial and important for a young talent like Dongre is the quest for a constant experimentation and to challenge the contemporary notions by refraining to the usual. The Young Turk has started getting acknowledgment in this art world and received Lalit Kala Akademi award and scholarship from Bombay art society both in 2009.

He has participated in several group exhibitions including at Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi; Visual Arts Gallery, India habitat Centre, New Delhi; Bharat Bhavan, Bhopal and Mystiq Art Gallery, New Delhi.■

Vikash Nand Kumar is a Delhi based art historian and critic.



ART REVIEW

Shailendra Tiwari

Deepak Sonar's Serenity

We are a bunch of happenings in time and space. The time as duration passes through us and is responsible for beginning and end but in between the passage of time there is a point at which, the happening has ceased and the other happening is yet to start. This is an abode of serenity which is being captured intuitively by Deepak Sonar in his latest works.

Here the forms begin and end, they are meeting, in polarity simultaneously they are repelled due to the absurdity of attraction.

The world of thoughts in the ocean of

consciousness melt just at the point of collapse where they are in transition to next beginning. The serenity expressed in that nothingness has no purpose it has no aim but as a seed it has tremendous potential. We join in his journey of forms to become formless just a void in chain of thoughts to become thought less...

According to the Artist :

" Each artist has his own experiences of life, each movement, happening, turnes his life towards uniqueness. These experiences always put impressions on his sensitive mind and he discovers his own symbols for his art and with the symbols he trys to create new vision .The process of art becomes provision for his journey of art. This process makes him matured. His sensitive mind is always impressed with the impressions of the surroundings.

I am always fascinated by Nature; it shows me its different moods and beauties.

From last one or two years my mind insists me to think towards global warming to read news about it to see effects of it and this subject gives me new direction to work and I would like to continue with the subject .The increase in the warming of the atmosphere has significant effects on both natural environment and human life. Obvious effects include glacial retreat, Arctic shrinkage, and worldwide sea level rise. As climate changes, everything changes from the natural habitats of wildlife to the culture and sustainability of a region.

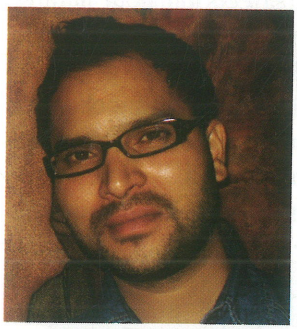
One of the most obvious effects of global warming involves the melting of the polar ice caps, glaciers, and permanent snow on our planet. As these continue to melt, sea levels rise. Rising sea levels are also caused by expanding ocean water, melting mountain glaciers, and the ice sheets of Greenland and Antarctica melting or sliding into the oceans. Rising sea levels result in coastal erosion, coastal flooding, increased salinity of rivers, bays, and aquifers, and shoreline retreat.

Melting ice caps will desalinize the ocean and disrupt natural ocean currents. This activity may cause extreme climate changes. Right now I am concentrating on this subject and all my creations are only revolving arround this". ■

Shailendra Tiwari is an art critic.

ART REVIEW

HITENDRA SINGH BHATI

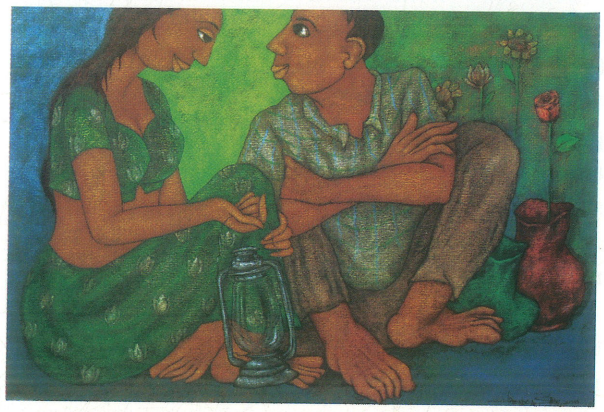


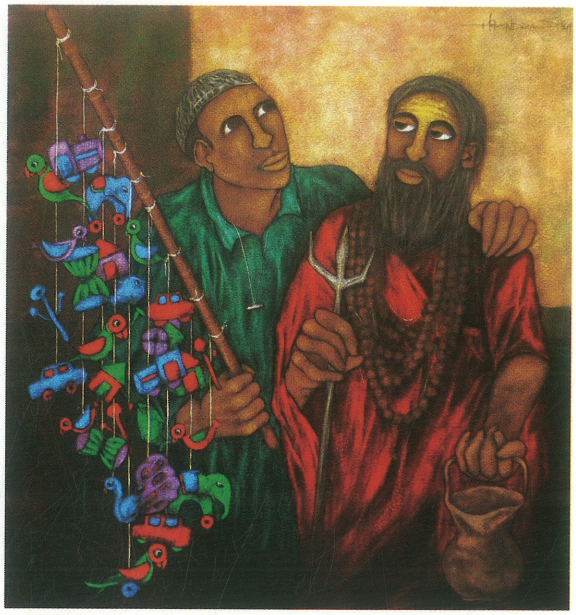
Hitendra Singh Bhati

Hitendra Singh Bhati is getting known not only for his rugged approach towards characterization of the dramatis personae, but also for picking on the common folk we come across in everyday life. The Chaiwallah who also plays Hanuman during the Ramalila festivities. The balloon-seller, the toy-seller, the artisans who creates these colourful toys in his ramshackle workshop, the flower-pot-seller, the chai-supplier boy, who carries a stack of cups and a kettle to the nearby labourers or rickshaw-pullers. And amidst these vending activities, a budding romance, wherein a flower-selling girl offers a flower to a suitor vendor.

A character from Barat procession, who carries a petromax or a set of tube-lights to light up the procession all the way may well amuse us, because we have seen him during the marriage season, carrying his pay-loads. A milk vendor and a chana-seller or peanut-seller conversing at a roadside tea-shop might, well recall the familiar scene to many. An engaging addition to vending is the fish aquarium in a small bowl, filled with water and the tiny fish - several of these are well displayed in the picture format. And then two women playing *Chaupad* on the room-floor is quite an addition to Bhati's works (this is typical of Rajasthan).

An apple-seller female and a young man with an apple reminds one of the Adam-and-Eve story from the Christian fold - the apple that caused their





expulsion from the garden of Eden - an event that began the civilisaiton of man, away from his earlier jungle (animal) life.

Hitendra Singh Bhati's two earlier shows - "Goods on the Roads" and "After Hard Work" (2008 and 2005, respectively) have proved that Bhati is maintaining his brand approach and his commitment to the lives and character of the ordinary folk who are in the survival race - living from hand to mouth, day in and day out. Bhati's colours are controlled and fully in tune with the ruggedness of the characters he picks on. And so are his compositions that highlight the unframed drama.

Bhati's exposure to the art-loving world has been enhanced through a good number of group shows he had participated, in Delhi, Jaipur, Mumbai and Udaipur etc. Bhati has also attended several art camps and has won several prestigious awards such as All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society (AIFACS) award in 1980, 81 and 2009. All India Art Teachers Exhibition, 2006, organized by Camlin Limited, at the South Central Zone Cultural Centres, Nagpur. Rajasthan. Lalit Kala Akademi award - 2001, 3 and 4, during its Kala Mela Contests and at West Zone Culture Centre, Udaipur.

Hitendra Singh Bhati's works have been collected over a period by prestigious art institutions and art collectors like the British Council, Samanvay Art Gallery, Jaipur "Trectabel Engineers & Constructors Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, NCERT, New Delhi, Hotel Samrat, ITDC, New Delhi, Shangrilla Art Gallery, Society for Promotion of Cultural Heritage, Trivandrum.

Bhati's latest show at the Shridharani Gallery, New Delhi, was a landmark in his career. Successful and impressive, the show drew many a art-lovers to the Gallery. ■

- The Art Critic : CMT

Painting on Metal sheet by M.F. Husain (10'x12') presented to Late Prime Mninister Indra Ghandhi in 1975

ESSAY

C.B. Gupta

Contemporary Art and The Problem of Conservation

A case study : Painting of Husain on Big Metalsheet

Contemporary art can be defined differently as art produced at this present point in time or art produced since World War Two. The definition of the word contemporary support the first view, but Museums of Contemporary Art commonly define their collections as consisting of art produced since World War Two. This form of art is of the post 1960 - modernist period. It was this period, which saw major socio-economic, cultural, political and also educational changes over the world, which undoubtedly influenced art, amongst many other productive fields. The rigidity in defining types of art was lost to a large extent during

Before treatment

After treatment

this time and this is what came to define contemporary art. Its flexibility aside, contemporary art deals with issues directly related to its present day world. Contemporary art is exhibited by commercial art galleries, private collectors, corporations, publicly funded arts organizations, contemporary art museums or by artists themselves in artist-run spaces. Contemporary artists chose to highlight the idea or impulse behind their work rather than concentrate on the medium or method used. They unlike earlier artists were not deterred by the thought of using various media and techniques in combination. Open to experimentation, these people pioneered the concept of setting their audience thinking about the subject as the most important aim of the artwork. Topics like racism, global warming, cloning and biotechnology, international politics, human rights, spirituality and economics are reflected in the works of contemporary artists. The advent of contemporary art marked the breaking of shackles by artists to move from the conventional inclination towards aesthetic beauty and purity to address subjects such as politics, which affect the layman. This is what brought the common man closer to the artist who didn't seem 'high and mighty' like an untouchable philosopher any more. Contemporary artists are supported by grants, awards and prizes as well as by direct sales of their work. Contemporary art can sometimes seem at odds with a public that does not feel that art and its institutions share its values. In Britain in the 1990s contemporary art became a part of popular culture, with artists becoming stars, but this did not lead to hope for "cultural Utopia".

There are close relationships between publicly funded contemporary art organisations and the commercial sector. For instance, in Britain a handful of dealers represent the artists featured in leading publicly funded contemporary art museums. Individual collectors can wield considerable influence. Charles Saatchi has dominated the contemporary art market in Britain since the 1980s; the subtitle of the 1999 book *Young British Artists: The Saatchi Decade* uses of the name of the private collector to define an entire decade of contemporary art production.

The institutions of art have been criticised for regulating what is designated as contemporary art. Outsider art, for instance, is literally contemporary art, in that it is produced in the present day. However, it is not considered so because the artists are self-taught and are assumed to be working outside of an art historical context. Craft activities, such as textile design, are also excluded from the realm of contemporary art, despite large audiences for exhibitions. Attention is drawn to the way that craft objects must subscribe to particular values in order to be admitted. "A ceramic object that is intended as a subversive comment on the nature of beauty is more likely to fit the definition of contemporary art than one that is simply beautiful."

Hence we can say that all art, at some time is, contemporary art. Now a days artists have at their disposal a tremendous assortment of natural and synthetic materials. Some of the famous Indian contemporary artists are F.N.Souza; B.Sanyal, Jatin Das, Jamini Roy, Shanti Dave, M.F.Hussain, Tyeb Mehta, Raza, Arpana Caur, Satish Gujral etc. Paintings are one of the most important categories of contemporary art. Now a days these artists incorporate in their art various natural and synthetic pigments. Earlier the paint media available to the artists included waxes, plant gum, egg, milk, animal hide, vegetable oils and plant resins, but today the artists are not limited to the traditional materials but choose a variety of commercial paint media such as acrylics, nitro-cellulose or alkylis as well as profusion of synthetic pigments. Because of this various conservation problem arises with these contemporary paintings and it is also said that, "the moment a painting is made it begins to age". In some paintings, metal pieces such as iron, brass, aluminium, copper, etc. are used which can also cause a problem. Synthetic materials like plastic, nylon, thermocol, sun mica, fibreglass, etc. also slowly and gradually gain a place on the paint layer of some works of art on canvas. The colours used these days for making the painting are usually synthetic and often after long periods of time they result in soiling of the colours, extent of cracking and cupping of its surface. For adhesion various materials like gum Arabic, animal glue, starch, shellac resin, different natural as well as synthetic adhesives have been used in the modern day paintings. These adhesives after a long period show a bad effect on the paintings as they under go chemical degradation. If a painting has been well constructed and the artist has used sound materials in his procedure then changes are not extreme in their effects and the painting doesn't suffer in appearance but in contemporary paintings we see the use of various mediums, which may increase the chances of faster deterioration. So the examination of a painting and recording every possible bit of information about a painting before any work is attempted is mandatory.

Visual examination along with photo documentation of these paintings should be done before it's treatment.

CASE STUDY

Report on the deterioration and conservation process for the big size painting on metal sheet by M.F. Hussain at National Bal Bhavan, New Delhi.

Theme: - An elephant protecting her child from a lion and tiger.
Medium: - Enamel paint on Iron Sheet.
Artist: - Maqbool Fida Hussain.
Period: -1975
Size:- 10'x20'
Paint Visible: - White, Green, Blue, Black, Red, Yellow.
Border: - Wooden Grey coloured border for encasing.
Support: - Different sizes of tin sheets total 14 nos. are nailed on wooden batons underneath to make the above size.
Ornamentation: - Nil
Historical Background: - Presented to Late Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1975.
Display: - Presently displayed against the stonewall.
Deterioration: - On examination dated 21.07,2009, the following points of deterioration noticed; -

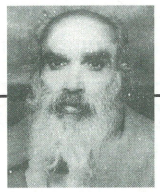
1. Deposit of Dust, Dirt, Cement, Paint Splashes and Water Stains on the surface.
2. Loss of metal sheet at some places due to rusting along with horizontal wooden batons in lower side.
3. Rusting of iron sheet is all over except painted area.
4. Minor scratches in the paint and paint flaking at some places.
5. Loss of paint adjacent to loss of support at points and some other places.
6. Major rusting of iron sheet (reverse side)
7. Minor dents at various places in the painting and pencil marks also.
8. A few wooden batons loss in strength and insect attack also at some places along with the tin losses and some batons have cracks and cobweb at reverse.
9. Seepage marks also notices at some places.
10. Waviness in the metal sheet also noticed at some places.

Conservation treatment: -Front Side: -
1 Loose paint and flaking of paint to be consolidate.
2. Mechanical cleaning with soft brushes from front and reverse.
3. Surface cleaning with distilled water and non-ionic soap solution bit by bit after test samples and removal of cementing material with the help of Scalpel.
4 Wiping out the moisture with cotton swabs simultaneously.
5. Cleaning of rust from the surface near the paint loss should be clean carefully with the cotton swabs, Sand paper or use of Kerosene Oil and Neutral Thioglycolic acid.
6. Filling the damage portion of the sheet filled with white metal sheet to make level of the painting or metal putty can also be used for filling up the gap of the painting.
7. Retouching match with the surrounding color of the loss area.
8. After completing the treatment both the parts of the painting reassembled together as it was before.
9.After treatment the whole painting can be encased in an aluminum frame with attached hanging arrangement to give the extra strength to the painting.

Reverse side: -
1. The paintings to be kept face down on a table with proper cushioningmaterials.
2. Carefully cleaning the rust with sand paper and use of Kerosene Oil and Neutral Thioglycolic acid.
3. Mechanical cleaning of the dust and dirt from all wooden batons and metal sheet.
4. Repairing the metal sheet losses with aluminum stainless steel, glavanised iron sheater sheet with the same thickness to the original and fixed with the epoxy resin.
5. Repairing of wooden batons wherever is required and strengthening with the metal support.
6. Removal of dent folds in metal sheet with wooden hammer.
7. An anti- rust coating like paint Paraloid b-92 or tannic acid be used for protecting from the rust.

Restoration of the painting was a challange and time bound. Two conservators Smt. Jyoti Raj & Smt. Sim Sankri were employed for four months to carry out the restoration work in consultation with Sh.C.B.Gupta appointed as consultant. The team of six conservators and assistants had sucessfully completed the work. ■

C.B. Gupta, Ex- senior technical restorer of National Museum, has written a number of articles on art and restoration of art.



POEM

Roop Chand

In the foot of the Himalayas

Along with the curling track
Of two parallel iron lines,
A few in numbers
The hill folks were walking down
And were talking to
Each other
About a bygone
Old happening
In and around
A high tower.

Far off I can see
In north a totem
On the highest peak.
That speaks
The endless stories
Of a happening
Happened on a bygone day
Around
And in
The high tower.

A form
A figure
A structure
A soft structure
Of a being
Of a body
Melted
And flowed
In the formless air
And then was lost
Forever
Here
In these green cubes
Prisms
Cones
And cylinders
Of the odd shapes.

The whispering trees
Now rattle their hands
Their bodies
Their limbs
And sing
A melanchol
An elegy
On the tomb
Of the hemisphere
Of the illusions.
And there rises
A picture
In the formless colours
In the melting matter

The voices
That rise
And fly
Up and down
In and around
The walking hill-folks
Carry a story
Of the olden days
That moves and gets lost
In the incoherent speech in the vale
I know not
The meaning
But I know
They talk
Of a sad affair
Of a dashing spark
That rose
And died,
In these green pyramids
Of the Shivalik's foot.

Time moved
Stamped
And crushed.
I can see
The dry blades
Of grass
Are flying
And flying with them
The fragments
Of an old happening
Of a closed chapter
Of ups and downs
In the cultural leap
Of the mankind
In the foot of the Himalayas. ■

Roop Chand is a senior artist and poet.

Geeta Chandran

Understanding Shiva's Dance

One of the most moving experiences for a dancer is to visit Chidambaram where Shiva, as Nataraja, king of dancers, is portrayed in his ecstasy-dance of the ananda tandavam. The Nataraja is probably the only icon of worship anywhere in the world where the deity is portrayed in a dancing posture. But the dance of Sh iva has a deep philosophical meaning that contains several lessons for us today and this ubiquitous icon is a dictionary of metaphors.

Geeta Chandran

The basic stance of Shiva-Nataraja is an unusual posture; the deity is precariously balanced on one foot, yet a faint smile hovers on his lips! Shiva decries fear and says that life must be faced boldly; life is to be enjoyed within moral and spiritual boundaries.

The body of Nataraja forms the central axis which has two polarities as its extremes. In one hand he holds the damru - drum of creation .Its nada-sound awakens the creative spirit; it is also the measure of all of time. Shiva-Nataraja's other hand holds aloft the agni-fire that can singe and destroy, signifying the terrifying and cataclysmic end. Human existence is played out between these polarities. Shiva-Nataraja implies that change is life's only shashwath-eternal philosophy; to create one has to destroy and from destruction alone can emerge the seeds of fresh creation. This acceptance of change, which is central to human existence, is to be accomplished with equanimity. It is the only constant truth. How to manage change - is n't that the quest of modern management? Well, India's

Shiva - Nataraja proto-principle of managing change is several millennia old!.

The hand positions of Shiva-Nataraja continue their metaphorical message. One hand in the abhaya mudra of benediction places Shiva both at the threshold and vortex of salvation. His other hand intriguingly points to his left foot which is raised; the big toe pointing towards the sky and to mukti-salvation. His other foot suppresses a demon-dwarf figure which is said to represent human ego. Dwarf-Muyalakan also represents darkness which Shiva keeps at bay. For Shiva represents light and glory; as represented by the magnificent and luminous arch of the nature/ cosmos which surrounds him.

Shiva's hair is matted to reflect the complexities of existence; and those locks are washed by the purest source of sustenance, the sacred river Ganga, representing the highest ideals of morality. The lesson of course is that purity of intent and morality in existence washes away the most cursed of troubles!.

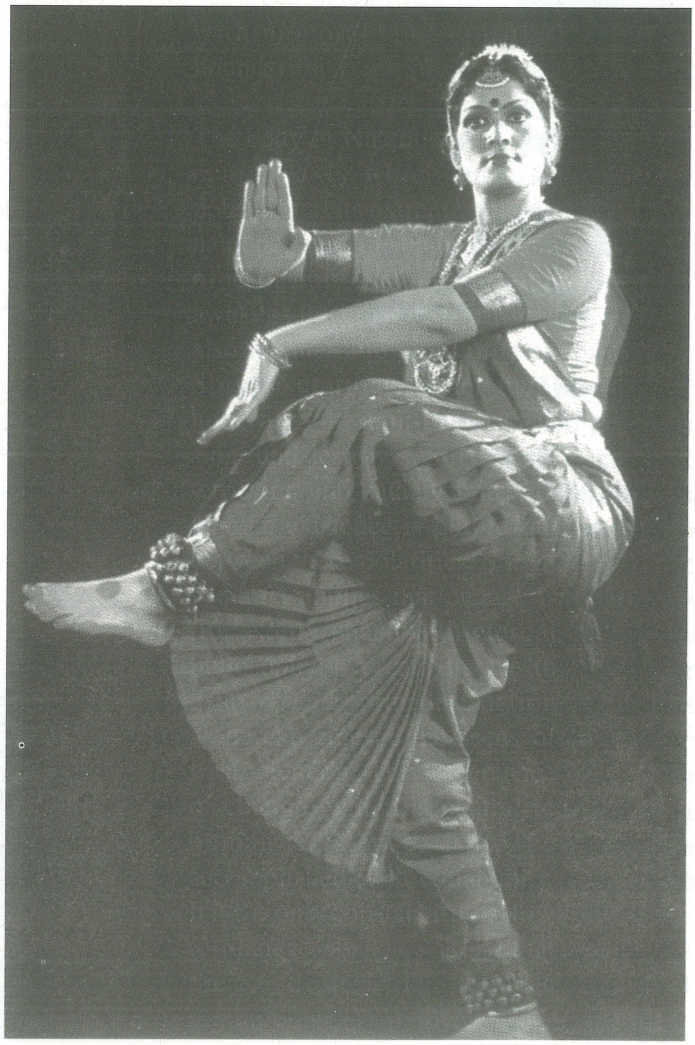
Shiva's countenance is calm; indeed a mysterious half-smile plays on his lips. Yet, above the smile, hovers the ominous third eye which, when closed, represents the inner - most recesses of knowledge; but when opened, on intense provocation, is capable of cataclysmic destruction. Once again, the polar opposites of creation and destruction congregate in the symbolism of Shiv a's third eye.

If he presides over space, shiva also rules over time. The snakes adorning him represent cosmic timelessness; and the crescent moon adorning his forehead is again a symbol of the fickleness of time. Once time is accepted as fickle, then the vicissitudes of life inflicted by it, somehow become less daunting. Again, constancy through change is represented by the Nandi-bull, constant companion, and shiva's vehicle.

Shiva-Nataraja is thus a symbol of insurance and assurance for life on earth!.

Courtesy: Niyogi Books

Geeta Chandran is a reputed Bharat Natyam dancer. She is a dance-bridge between the pristine classical style of Bharat Natyam and more contemporary dance aesthetic.



Geeta Chandran

INSTITUTION

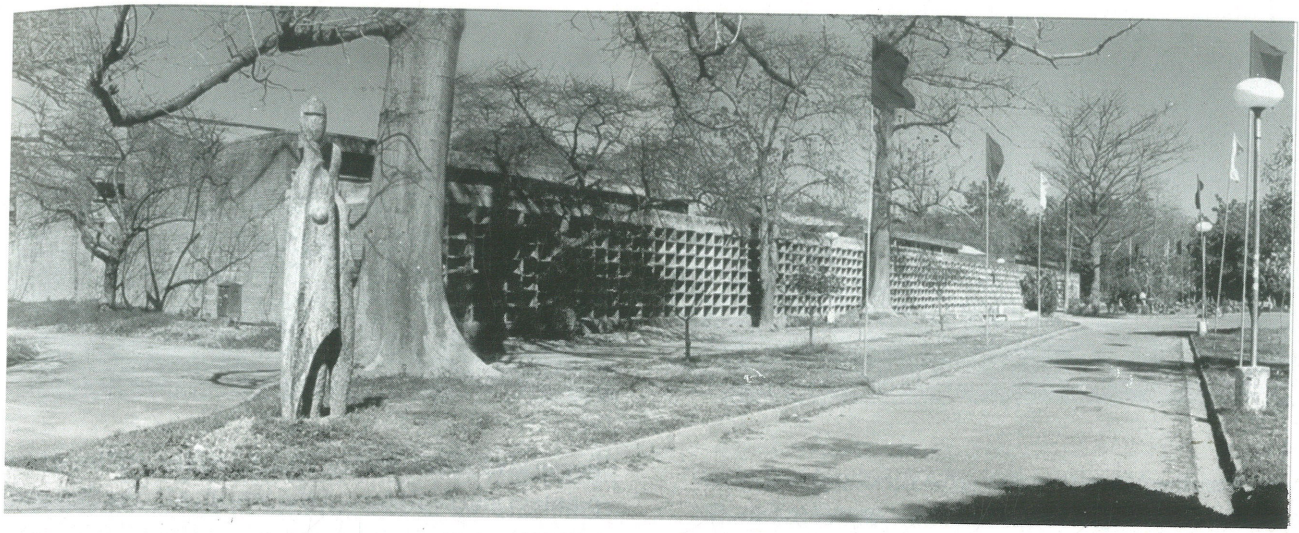
D.S. Kapoor

60 years old institution with a century old glorious heritage

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE OF ART, CHANDIGARH

The Government College of Art is one of the oldest Institutions of our country. It was set up under the name of Mayo School of Art, Lahore (now in Pakistan) in 1870, during the reign of the British. Its palace type building was adjacent to the Central Museum, Lahore near Anarkali. The Mall road was a kind of dividing line between the old and new Lahore. The Mayo School of Art was at the far end of the Mall, while at the other end were the Governor's House and the Lawrence Gardens. John Lockwood Kipling was the founder Principal of this premier Institution. The City of Lahore, was the hub of commercial and cultural activities in northern India and always welcomed the new ideas brought by the invaders and immigrating people from time to time. New discoveries and big events at times accelerated the changes. Its genesis lay in the painful partition in which people and institutions were separated.

At Lahore the Mayo School of Art was full of glory. It was the institution where children of the Elite were sent for their basic education and training in the field of Fine Arts. Among the members of teaching faculty who served the institution were such luminaries as B.C. Sanyal, Dhan Raj Bhagat, S.L. Prasher, Munshi Miran Baksh, Abdur Rahman Chughtai. At that time this institution was frequently



visited by the Elites of the British Government and of the country.

Sumarendra Nath Gupta became the first Indian Principal of this prestigious Art Institution in the year 1930 who was successor to British Principal Lionel Heath. He never cared for degree or diploma as a scroll to be a teacher he looked for an artist in a teacher. Thus he gathered many creative persons who were not having any degree or diploma but a flair for teaching. Ram Singh and Mian Mohammad Hussain were the most notable among them. Painting and Sculpture sections were indeed a matter of great pride for the Art lovers of Lahore. Some of the contemporary artists, then practising in Lahore were M.A.R. Chughtai, Hussain Buxe, Allah Bux, Thakur Singh, Abdul Aziz Din, B.C. Sanyal. D.R.Bhagat, Amrita-Sher-Gill, Ishwar Singh, Brij Lal, Amarnath Sehgal Roop & Mary Krishna.. They were known out side Punjab and were so closely associated with Mayo School of Art and some of them have their own studios at Anarkali, on the mall and on Hospital road. These Artists have been experimenting successfully with new possibilities and made significant contribution to contempory art of India.

The School had excellent crafts teachers. Hazi Saheb, Sarder Sunder Singh, Sadhu Singh were the most eminent craftsmen. After the foundation course students opted for Painting, Clay Modelling, Wood Work, Lacquer Turning, Jewellery Designing and Copper beating. The school had a strong bias in favour of training craftsmen-designers in the fields of tradional crafts in which painting and clay modelling played a subordinate role. Students were also taugh the elements of decorative design, Urdu caligraphy and routine practice of round and relief form in the elementary clay modelling. Sardar Ram Singh, Mian Mohammad Husain, , S.L. Prasher later served the institution as Principals.

After the partition in 1947 the Mayo School of Art was also bifurcated into two, one part of the school was left in Pakistan (now known as National College of Art, Lahore), other part of the school was set up in Shimla, the then capital of Punjab. The school was given a new name Government School of Art and Craft, Punjab. After persistent persuasion and pressure on the government by Satish Gujral, S L Prasher and a few others, it was finally established on 16 th August 1951 nearly on the same pattern as it was in Lahore.The very fact that it was put under the administrative control of Directorof Industries and Industrial Training Punjab, showed that the status of the institution was not more than that of a Training Centre. S.L. Prasher, an alumnee of the Mayo School of Art, was asked to organise the art school.

He was the Vice Principal of Art School in Lahore at the time of partition. He was appointed as the first principal of this institution and was given free hand to work, but with very limited financial resources to restructure the institution. His search for teachers continued and he succeeded in getting creative people of his choice to join hands with him. P.N. Mago, Satish Gujral, Baldev Raj Rattan, Kanwal Nain A.C. Gautam, Sunirmal Chatterjee, P. R. Trivedi, , N. K. Dey, were the illustrious teachers. They were trained by different teachers under different centres of Art, like Calcutta School of Art, Mayo School of Art Lahore, Viswa Bharti University Santiniketan, Sir J. J. School of Art, Mumbai and College of Art, Delhi. They have brought with them certain distinguished mark to enrich the art of this institution and also served as a stimulus to provide excellent coaching in art to the young minds. Kanwal Nain Kotra and B. R. Rattan are still contributing their services to the college as and when required.

Many Master Craftsmen like Pritam Singh, Jit Singh, Master Hazara Singh, Master Sujan Singh, Maghar Singh, Beli Ram were recruited to impart training in allied courses like jewellery designing, repousse work, lacquer work, ivory and inlay carving, sheet metal work with the aim to maintain a sound tradition of craftsmanship. They were the celebrated masters of their trade. These teachers joined the institution on very meagre salaries at the motivation of Principal S. L. Prasher.

The art school started functioning in a modest way at the fairly large cottage just below the Rashtrapati Niwas (Now known as the Institute for Advanced Studies) at the Summer Hill with a beautiful surrounding of Red Rhododendron flowery trees. The Institution was functioning with a lot of enthusiasm. Satish Gujral had to leave the institution because of his disability. Today he is one of the great painters and sculptors of the world. Mr. Prasher was very much upset at his departure from the school. Later Arun Bose, the promising young artist of West Bengal was recruited but had to leave the institution as he was non-matric. Mr. Bose later became the senior most professor in the famous Prat Institution at New York.

At Shimla the Art School became one of the important art and cultural centres. The students of this institution could be seen all around the city. They were generally seen painting and sketching in the valley, ridge, The Mall and so forth. Students and teachers were so closely associated with each other that they became one of the Kala Gharanas. Beside 5 years diplama courses, the school has also provided comprehensive courses such as Art Masters / Art and Crafts Teachers Training of 4 years and 2 years duration respectively. Sculpture and Craft section were down below the large cottage. Under this fragile structure the master craftsmen and others worked in their original style with utmost devotion under the creative and able guidance of Mr. Prasher, who not only maintained the tradition but also took a step to modernism.

S.L. Prasher retired in 1959 and Sushil Sarkar replaced him as Principal in the year 1960. He was an eminent artist and a protagonist of the Bengal School of Art. He promoted art and culture through various artistic pursuits and activities. When Chandigarh came up as the new Capital of Punjab, the school of Art shifted here in 1962. Situated in the heart of the City, the campus has been beautifully designed as a composite cultural complex by the great French Architect Le-Corbusier. The building is surrounded by vast green lawns along side the leisure valley against the beautiful back drop of Shivalik Hills. We must salute the efforts of Dr. M. S. Randhawa the then first Chief Commissioner of Chandigarh. He was a great art lover and he further laid the foundations for the scenic beauty of this college by choosing and planting trees on the campus, which today possessively guard the beautiful surroundings of the institution.

The institution has big studios with a full-fledged lighting and infrastructure facilities, where the students can be seen doing their creative exercises. The institution had a full-fledged Art and Craft section where a number of new crafts were introduced. Following the reorganisation of the

Punjab state with effect from Ist November 1966 the control of this institution had come over to Chandigarh Administration with a new name Government College of Art and Craft Chandigarh. Beside this the Institutions of Design for Handicrafts by the Punjab and Haryana Government were also established adjoining to the college campus. Here the students of this college can see the execution of design into finished shape of any handloom / handicraft product. Mr. Sarkar was taking lot of interest in the college with a view to carrying forward precious legacy to the future generations.First Ved Prakash Ghai and later Raj K. Jain joined the faculty and made substantial contribution to the teaching of Painting. In the late 60s a host of teachers like R C Singla, R D Lohtia, Prem Singh, B M Chugh, H S Jagdev,Pratibha Rastogi, Surinder Sharma, H S Kular, Ram Kumar Sharma, M S Sidhu, Jagdish Ahuja, Inderjit Gupta, Madan Lal Arora, were recruited to the college as teachers, most of them had their training from this college. The institution has made a significant contribution to the cultural life of the city. During this period the college presented a Punjabi Folk Dance "Bhangra" and was highly acclaimed at the national level.

After the retirement of Sushil Sarkar, in the year 1976 Prof. Jagmohan Chopra was appointed as a Principal of this Institution. He is earlier on the faculty of College of Art, Delhi. He is a great print maker. During this period many changes took place, the building of this institution was expanded. The College of Art got affiliated to Panjab University in 1978 and instead of 5 years Master Diploma was converted into professional B.F.A. Degree. The institution was given the new logo and named Government College of Art, Chandigarh. In pursuance of BFA degree allied courses were

overlooked and later abolished, other courses such as Art Masters,Art and Crafts Teacher Training were also discontinued in 1979. As such one of the master craftsmen named Sujan Singh was forced to seek premature retirement. Graphics (Print making) was introduced as an independent course. The interest in print making increased mainfold among the young and aspiring art students. Advertising Campaign as a new assignment was introduced for the students of Applied Art, with a view to develope a creative ability and professional skill to meet the requirements of advertising art and industry. The contribution of Prem Singh as Head of the Department of Applied Art in making this teaching programme more profession-oriented is indeed significant. Beside practicals the students are required to study theory subjects like Aesthetics, Methods & Materials, Advertising: Profession & Practice, which are helpful in practicals. The college has once again become the platform for the upcoming artists in bringing out their talent and creative potential under the guidance of the learned faculty. Workshops, slide shows, seminars and lectures was a regular feature of the college. Exhibitions were organised at the state as well as national level. Many internationally famous artists - M.F. Husain, Carol Summers (USA), K.K. Hebbar, Ram Kinker and several others from Britain, Japan, Italy,Korea & Germany visited this Institution.

With the sudden exit of Mr. Jagmohan, Chopra in the year 1989 the college ran into a rough weather. No regular Principal has been appointed since then. Mr. V.N. Singh, Director Government Museum and Art Gallery was given the additional charge of the post of Principal. Some young teachers who had a zeal to produce result were appointed in different disciplines in the year 1990. Later in 1996 Ranbir Dev Lohtia, one of the faculty members was given the charge of the post of Principal of the institution. Teachers and the students started working together with a new spirit. Participation in Art and Cultural activities increased. The Chandigarh Administration took interest in the development of the college. In the year 1997 the college entered in to another chapter of technology, when the computer graphic was introduced for the students as one of the subjects.

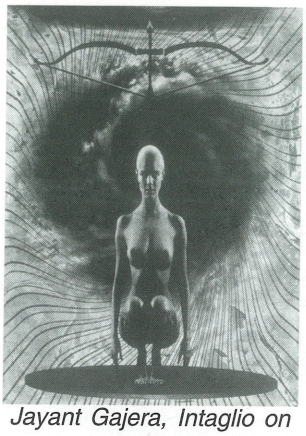
In 1999 Prem Singh, eminent educationist and recipient of Triennale India Award was given the charge of the post of Principal of this institution. It seems that a New Mayo School of Art with all its past glory is born again to provide a solid platform for the training of creative and talented minds. New objectives, fresh teaching programmes and training schedules were chalked out to achieve an overall refinement of the students perception not confined to the skill of profession alone but also to create the right kind of intellect as well as emotional cultivation. After the retirement of Prem Singh charge of

Principal was handed over to Brahm Parkash, who has been serving as a Faculty member in the College, is an eminent artist with National and Triennale India Award to his credit. Master degree (MFA) in all the discipline was introduced for the first time with his great efforts in the year 2004. Archana Shastri from NIFT joined as a first lady principal, in the year 2008. In the year 2009, D S Kapoor took the charge as Principal. He belongs to the third generation of students and teachers in this institution. He is founder president of Kala Maitri Alumni Association of this institution. His contribution are launching of Computer Graphics as one of the subject, introduction of Float making during Chandigarh Carnival, designing of College websites etc.

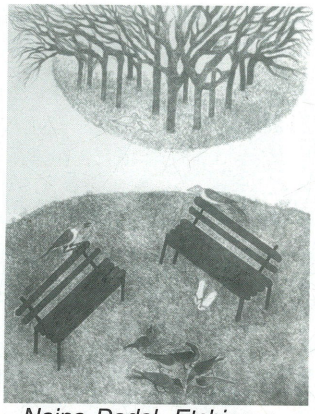
The college has produced a good number of artists, whose contribution in enriching the quality of life of our people through art can not be over looked. Among the notables are Sohan Qadri, R.S. Rania, Shiv Singh, Surinder Bhardwaj, Prem Singh, Avtarjeet Singh Dhanjal, H.S. Kular, Gurcharan Singh, Viren Tanwar, Ranbir Singh Kalika, Vinay Vadhera, Sukvinder Singh. Since art is the vehicle of social change it is a big responsibility of the growing artists to take forward the precious legacy of this rich heritage through their artistic manifestation . It is a matter of great pride for this institution that some of the students from this Institution like Jodh Singh, Shiv Singh, Gurchanran Singh, Ranbir Singh Kalika, Subhash Gupta,Sukhvinder Singh,Diwan Manna have won the National Award from Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. Another point of interest is that many artists who were trained at this Institution and are practising here are very well known in the northern region, they are also associated with this college and State Lalit Kala Akademies for past many years and have found expression in their artistic manifestation and have also made a considerable mark in the modern art movement. Some of these artists include Prem Singh, Jodh Singh , Shiv Singh, Malkit Singh, Balwinder Singh ,Vijay Ozo ,Viren Tanar,H S Puremal.

The College of Art, since its inception organises its Annual Art Exhibition regularly. It is one of the big events of the college where works of art by students are put on display. Five awards for the works of outstanding aesthetic merits are given in the memory of prominent artists and art connoisseurs namely Amrita Sher-gill, S. L. Prasher, Sushil Sarkar, Sujan Singh and M. S. Randhawa. The exhibition also projects the nature of professional training given to the students in making them top professionals in the field of Applied Art, Graphics (Printmaking), Painting and Sculpture. The Chandigarh College of Art is the only nucleus institution of its kind in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal and Jammu & Kashmir. The creative approach to learning at this institution should continue with a motto "we love nature and play with colours".■

The author is the Principal of Government College of Art, Chandigarh.



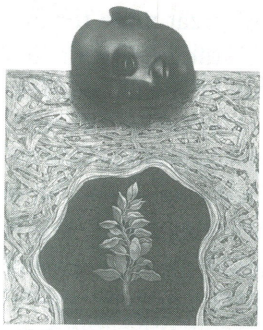
Jayant Gajera, Intaglio on paper



Naina Dadal, Etching on paper

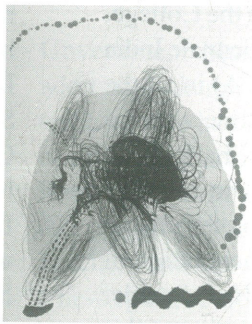
Sanat Kar, Lithography

Ajit Seal, Litho & Photography

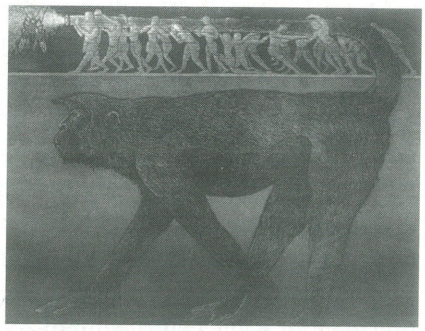


Asim Pal, Etching on paper

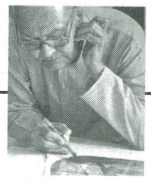
Ravindra Kasta, Photo Polimer Etching



Avijit Roy, Chinecolle with stone litho on paper



Jayanti Rabadia, Etching on paper



ESSAY

Jyoti Bhatt

Printmaking

A print is an impression of an image from one surface transferred on another surface. A thumbprint on paper and a footprint on soft ground are its two very common forms. Printed images of hand palms on the walls of ancient cAves are perhaps the oldest prints found. Embossed relief images on terracotta fired clay tablets from Harappan period can also be considered prints. Patterns on textile printed with decorative motifs carved on wood blocks are some of the more common form of prints known to us. However it was only after the invention of paper, people started making prints of visual images and written data on a large scale. This enabled them to make a substantial number of almost identical copies of the original image, which can then beavailed by many people at once. This practice device was improvised and perfected from simple wood blocks to fine engravings. More methods and techniques were also invented and developed such as Stencils, Intaglio and Lithography. Prints made from the images engraved on thin metal plates by highly skilled craftsmen from the famous works of master painters were very popular form of reproductions available in Europe. In India, Raja Ravi Varma had made large number of copies of several of his own paintings by Lithographic process. His and many similar Oleographs have found place on the walls of almost all houses during the pre-independence era in India.

Thus Printmaking can be defined as art of creating visible expressions or forms, employing the processes of printing.

Making a print requires that initially an image is

made on a piece of wood, metal sheet, screen etc. (referred in this note as matrix and matrices) which is then transferred or impressed on another surface-usually on paper. Most artists make a small 'Edition' a number of impressions from the same matrix-by repeating the printing process, so that more people can have the pleasure of owning it.

Relief print is a mirror (reversed) image of the one cut on the block. Some of the most common examples of the reief printing are rubber stomps and textiles printed with wood blocks. In India, until 1960 letterpress machines that used relief process printed nearly all books, magazines and newspapers. First printing press was imported during Aurangzeb's rule by a Gujrati businessman named Bhimji Parekh in Surat. Before advent of the process of making photomechanical metal blocks, hand engraved wood blocks were used for letterpressprinting machines.

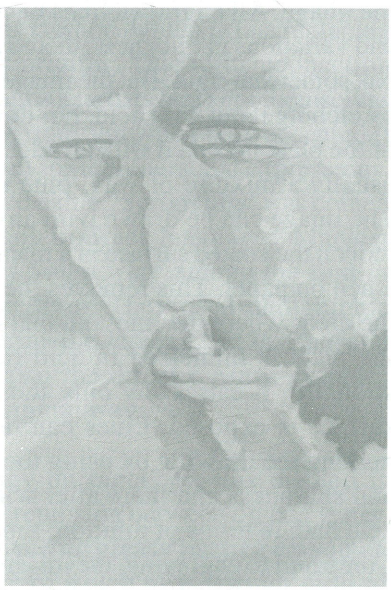
In relief process the artist usesa piece of wood plankor any other similar material that has a flat surface and draws an image on it. Parts of the image that is to be white (or the colour of paper to be used for printing) are gouged out from its original surface so that the image stands out as a relief. When ink of any colour is applied on it, only the uncut parts of the surface receive it. As the necessory pressure is applied when the wood block (matrix) is brought in contact with a paper, the inked image is transferred onto it. Prints made with relief process, usually have bold and sharp black and white or distinct tonal areas. However, instead of a horizontally cut wood plank, vertical cross section cut from fine-grained wood are used for finer details. An image made this way is called Wood Engraving.The tools used for this are also different. Apart from the texture of the wood, relief prints would also show the character of tools used for cutting and the manner in which artists has used them. Each artist has a personal way of creating the image and handling the tools. Wood engraved blocks were used for publishing and such industrial printing until photo engraving tookover. Illustrations for storybooks, textbooks, adverts etc. were also printed from such hand engraved wood blocks. Romendra Nath Chakrbarty and Haren Das are perhaps the only Indian artists who have worked in wood engraving medium.

Those who work in this method normally use oily ink that is applied on the matrix with a rubber roller. But traditional Japanese printers applied thin and delicate washes of water-colour with brush. So, their prints had a very different appearance and subtle tonal nuances. Woodcut (also known as Xylography), Linocut and Wood Engraving are the more exploited forms of relief printing. These and similar nomenclatures are often used for the prints as well as processes used to make them. Nowadays some artists are using plastics or similar synthetic materialsandply-woodsfor making largesize prints.

Inexpensive reproductions of Kalighat paintings were reproduced as wood cut printsin Bengal. But Mondial Bose and Chitto Prasad ore two of the Indian artists who had adopted this method later for their

Oleograph - Raja Ravi Verma Press

Limited edition serigraph by Shanti Dave



Limited edition serigraph by Akbar Padamsee

personal expressions. During 1970s and 80s, Zarina Hashmi and Shanti Dave have used wood cut quite innovatively. Vinod Rai Potel had many Linocuts prints.

Intaglio

Intaglio process depends on a principal exactly opposite of the relief printing. The image to be printed is incised on a smooth and shiny surface of a thin metal sheet, usually of copper or zinc. Image is made on it by engraving or scoring the surface with appropriate but rather exclusive tools. Apart from the skill and experience, working directly on the hard metal plate requires muse power to make a line or mark on the plate, as the tool is pushed away. This has a considerable effect on the final appearance of the image. All engraved lines have very sharp edges and variations in thickness, thereby making the image oak somewhat rigid. But the image can also be created by etching it out with acid. For doing this, thesurface of the plate is coated with an add resisting ingredient usually a mixture of wax, pine rasin and bitumen. The image can be drawn with any kind of a pointed tool on the coated surface in a manner similar to using a pen on paper. This removes the coating only from the areas where the linesand marks are made. When the plate is immersed in acid (diluted to required strength), it eats awoy only those areas where the surface is exposed. Lines can be controlled while making the drawing by using tools of various kinds and sharpness and there after with the effect of the acid bath in terms of dilution, time and temperature. Compared to engraving, the images drawn and etched in this manner have fluidity and calligraphic character.

Ink is filled in the incised image on the plate. Then the surface is thoroughly cleaned but, the plate retains the ink in proportion to the depth of the lines and smoothness of various areas of its surface. Print is pul ed from it by putting a damp paper on it. Both these are then passed together between two cylindrical rollers of the printing press. As the rollers of the press provide very heavy pressure, the paper picks up the inkfrom the grooves. And, depending on the depth, lines and marks transferred from incised grooves turn up as raised ones in the print. One can actually feel this by touching the printed image. Any kind of intaglio print is also a mirror image of theone on the matrix. Because it is possib e to apply ink on the plate with a roller (brayer), there has been a further expansion in the latitude of printing in this medium.

William Stanley Hayter revived and experimented with colour printing at his print studio 'Atelier 17' in Paris. 'VISCOSITY' which is relatively a new -about seven decade old technique was invented there. Krishna Reddy and Motiwala, two printmakers of Indian origin, have contributed considerably to its development during the initial stage. Due to the different proportions of oil; the layers of inks with different viscosities do not get mixed with each other when overlapped. This enables a printmaker to apply differed coloured inks on various levels of incised as well as the original surface of the matrix and print it at one run of the press.

Multi coloured prints made in this manner, is a unique and most important role of 'Viscosity' printing. In all other standard methods more matrices are necessary for printing two or more colours as they are printed separatey. R. M. Palniappan and Rini Dhumal are among those Indian printmakers who have been using this.

There are several techniques (etching, aquatint, dry point, mezzotint etc.) used for making matrices for intaglio prints. Unlike most woodcut prints, intaglio prints can have minute details, subtle tonality and a large verify of textures. Somnath Hore was among the pioneers in India who used this method in quite original way. He had also made 'Blind Prints' in which the inkless images he printed from matrices made on cement slabs, appeared as embossed. Laxma Gaud, and Anupam Sucl are two of the other Indian printmakers who have worked extensively inthis medium.

Although printed by very high tech processes and machines, the most common examples of intaglio printing we are familiar with are currency notes (printed from engraved plates). Brand names and logos etc. on plastic bags and fine designs on textiles are some times printed by the similar method known as'photogravure'. Several photographers had used this during early decades of the last century for giving art touch to their photographs. Some printmakers in western countries are using this but none in India.

Serigraphy

People in India have been using simple stencils for making Rangoli, Graffiti of election slogans on walls and writing labels on parcel boxes. Screen-printing is a developed form of the stencil method. Screen made with fine fabric (silk, nylon or steel) is used as a matrix for this. Except the parts of an image to be printed the rest of the screen surface is blocked with glue or some equivalent substance. While

Screen made with fine fabric

printing, ink does not get transferred but passes through the unblocked parts of the screen onto a paper (or any other surface) kept under neath it. Unlike the other processes, the screen-printed image is not reversed. Large, flat and opaque as well as translucent colored areas can be printed most effectively in this method. While special paper of good quality and flat surface is normally preferred for other methods, screen printing can be done quite effectively on almost any material and surfaces, therefore this method has been used for various kinds of commercial printing. Most of the textile printing is now done with this method, which is fast replacing the old wood block printing. Due to its connection with commercial printing, artists had kept themselves away for quite some time and when they accepted it as a potential medium for their personal expressions, the new, sophisticated name ' Serigraphy' was coined for it. ' Seri' mean silk in Greek languages. Manjeet Bawa and Paranjeet Singh were among the first in India to use this medium. They used photgraphic technique for preparing the screens. but Jai Zharotia has used that and also the direct (Auto -graphic) method in a quite original way.

Lithography

Invented in Germany during 1796, this method is based on the natural repulsion between oil and water. Initial image is drawn with greasy ink or a crayon on the flattened surface of a slab of particular kind of limestone. The top layer of its surface absorbs and retains the grease. While printing, the surface is

dampened. The greasy areas of the image repel water and only the remaining surface become damp.The dampened areas in turn, repel the oily ink that is rolled over the image. Under heavy pressure from a printing press, the inked image is then impressed on a paper. Image printed with this method also gets reversed - from left to right. Unlike the other three methods, in lithography the surface of the stone remains plane, there by, the more accurate label for this method is'Planographic'. New materials, such as thin metal plate and plastic sheet have more or less replaced the limestone now, especially at the industrial level. However, many printmakers prefer to work on the litho slabs. Unfortunately, this stone is not excavated any more. And, as they have become collectors item the old ones are disappearing.

Compared to the other three methods Lithography is more direct. Although the printed image is reversed, it retains most of the original characters of the artist's drawing. This is mainly because instead of the sharp and hard tools such as knives, needles, burinsetc, an artist draws directly on the matrix with a pen, brush, crayon and similar implements employed for drawing on a paper. There are methods by which the problem of reversed image is so tackled. Instead of working directly on the matrix, the image can be drawn on a special Transfer Paper. When this is imprinted on the matrix it gets reversed. And, finally, when the image is printed on a paper from the matrix, it is reversed again. This way, the final print would match the one that was drawn on the transfer paper. Until the 1980s many Urdu newspapers were printed using this method. Thin metal sheet matrices were prepared by imprinting the matter written on transfer paper. This method is necessary when the printed image shows written words, a portrait, or a symbol like 'Swastika', because their correct, left or right position has special significance.

Most of the printing at the industrial level is now done with similar method known as 'Photo Offset Lithograph; The image is transferred photographically on the matrix. At an industrial level, photo offset has now replaced letterpress and photogravure methods. Almost all newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, posters etc. ars printed with this method. Somanath Hore, D. Devraj and Nagraj have made many prints in this method.

Modern artists have often mixed mediums and techniques from various disciplines for providing necessary edge to their visual expressions. Print makers also have pursued this to some extend. A part from mixing the mediums few also adopted uncommon medium such as 'Rubbing'. We all have tried this method during our childhood by putting a coin under a paper and then rubbing pencil over it. This has been practiced for a long time by archeologists for making impressions directly from historical inscriptions-such as Tamra Patras- carved on metal, or from 'Shila Lekhs' carved on stones. Soft damp paper is put over the inscription and a crayon or ink is rubbed on the backside. This way, the original precious images do not get spoiled by ink and do not get reversed. Excluding a few, printmakers have not even tried their hands on this medium. Bhupendra Karia was the only Indian who had made some rubbing impressions from 'Pallas' (memorial stones).

Photograpy

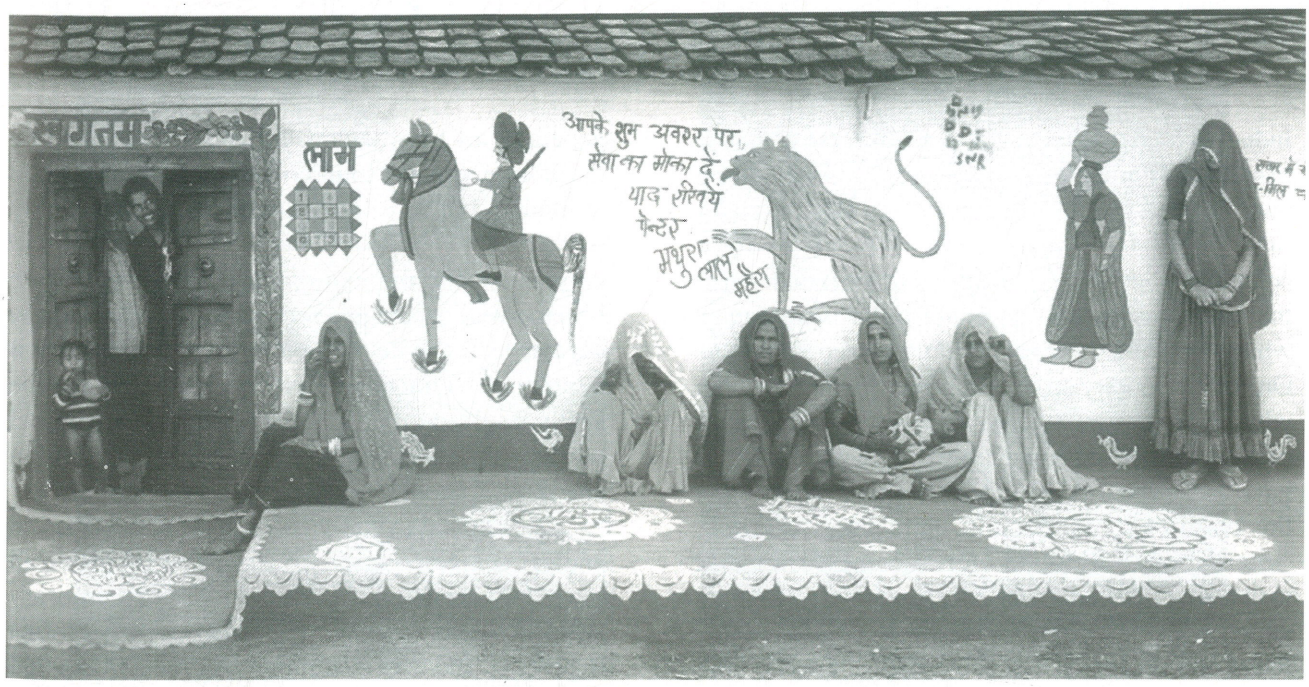
The invention of photography was announced to the public in 1839 and has been a very strong force that changed our life in many ways. It specially affected visual arts in a big way. Most of the then popular methods used for making reproductions became obsolete and this artistic craft, which was done earlier by creative individuals on a small-scale level slowly, got developed into large and high-tech industries. The printing methods used now for most of the reproductions at industrial level make some use of photography. Such methods are referred as 'Photo Mechanical'. It has become possible to make thousands or even a larger number of copies within a very short time. When compared to a hand made print, the cost for such a mass produced reproduction is understandably far less. In spite of the proliferation of photomechanical processes, artists have preferred

the manual methods of printmaking for their personal visual expressions. Although, there are some similarities in the process of making a drawing and such prints, there is a vast difference between methods and implements used for creating images and their final appearance. This had made one professor of painting in France very angry that he declared, "from today painting is dead". But contrary to that, fortunately painting has survived.Painters and photographers enriched their arts by learning and borrowing from each other. Though for long time people in art world refused to accept any photographic image as an art form as it was 'made by machine'. Prints that included any kind of photography related techniques were also not accepted in art exhibitions. However, since the 1960s the number of artists using a camera has increased continuously. Printmakers have also started incorporating photographic images and the techniques (even Xeroxed images) in their prints. Similarly painters also now use such images and often get that screen printed on their canvases.

It is said that history always repeats itself- Some thing similar to the earlier dilemma of relationship between photography and printmaking is now taking place in art world due to the spread of digitalization of photography and image making. As usual, people are opposing this too. But it may not be very long before all these including computers would also become tools used by artists for their creative expressions.

Perhaps the best way for appreciating the distinctive beauty of any of the original prints is to make it ourselves or at least to observe the entire process. One should also see various kind so such prints carefully and compare them with each other and also with the reproductions of paintings, drawings and prints which are found in art publications. ■

Jyoti Bhatt is a senior artist who to his credit has many recognitions and awards. He lives and works in Vadodara.



Villagers- A photograph by Jyoti bhatt

Seema Chaturvedi, Oil on Paper

Kiran Murdia, Oil on Canvas

ESSAY

Dr. Archana Rani

Women Artists of Rajasthan
a mix of tradition with modernity

Indian Contemporary art today stands on an enduring base. The quality of work not only is compared internationally but is meaningful and more exciting than the expressions current in many western countries. For this great creativity of the Indian artist, there is a reason and an ethic. India is a country which has a history of varied multifaceted traditions. Our contemporary artists today signify those people who have shed off the western model as well as traditional type art productions. While struggling to have a share in the abruptly changing society and the realities that surround them they create an 'international style' in works using forms and materials of their own choice. Possibilities for new expressions have opened up with the use of new forms and materials. The acute critical mind is now heading towards maturity in the expression of what generates art from within. Influences generated by the indigenous art of India contributed a distinct strain to modern Indian painting over a period of roughly half a century. Arising in a period of eclecticism and experiment the miniature paintings inspired style became very acceptable for a time though it is now superseded by more modern forms. Looking back it is possible to trace and evaluate its variations, the style itself can now be seen as a historical phenomenon which was part of a period of transition and reorientation.

The look and feel of Rajasthan provides an endless source of inspiration to modern artists all over. I try to reveal here how the contemporary Artists of Rajasthan are reinterpreting these forms to produce and take inspirations for their works that will stand for eternal aesthetic quality. It is a glance

at the exciting developments in today's contemporary art scene of the artists of four generations. And one can see how the power & beauty of Rajasthan's decorative heritage, the skill of being able to use different patterns, forms and shapes in endless combination of scintillating colours and rhythms and themes are being utilized in all aspects of the contemporary visual arts. The artist attempted to present a coherent world of vital images out of his/her heightened awareness. Their images could be made visible, what was not directly visible to the senses, through a combination of symbolic forms and proportion some fundamental aspects of the universe and its supreme consciousness.

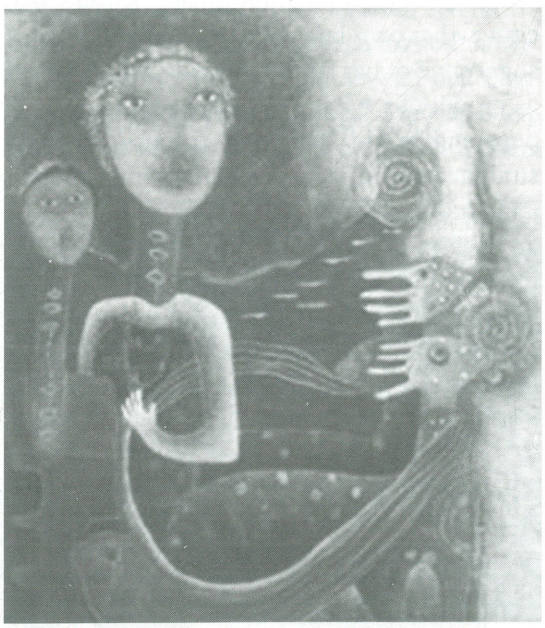
In the contemporary art scenario it is not only inappropriate but also inhuman to discriminate between men and women and since, I strongly feel against this unjust matter. Women have active participation in the traditional art of Rajasthan. Traditional artist Sh. Lal Joshi's sister Sunderbai is an efficient pad painter. Famous Nathdwara artist Sh. Ghasi Ram's doughter was a skillful artist. In the same way a lot of women artists from older and new generation are practising artists and their constant activeness have definitely enriched the art world. But still there are only few women artists who are nationally acclaimed. Amongst them some have been working while staying in Rajasthan and never broken their bonds with this land. The present essay has been based on such artists.

These women artists about whom I would be discussing are Veerbala Bhavsar, Kiran Murdia, Surjeet Kaur, Meena Baya, Seema Chaturvedi and Meenu Shrivastava.

Veerbala Bhavsar

Dr. Verbala Bhavsar is a renowned painter, sculptor and poetess. She was the first lady professor of Drawing & Painting in the University in Rajasthan. She was born on 10th Oct 1941 at Banswada Rajasthan. She did twenty four solo shows from 1971 to 2008 and was honoured with many awards e.g. State Lalit Kala Academy, Kala Ratna, Mewar Foundation Award etc.

The character of villages, ruins, tribal and folk art have inspired her to do something new in the field of fine arts. But divine and transcendental look of nature forced her to paint and write poetry. All these things take shapes in her mind and urge her to express/visualize them on canvas/paper. To express herself, she uses brush, colour or sand as a medium of painting. First she applies some glue on the canvas in a desired form then sprinkle the sand over it and creation starts. For this she uses only the river sand because of transparency in the grains. Through this medium she became able to show the three dimensional effects, illusions, transparency, depth and distance with light and shade in the painting if required. She searched out that the grains of sand have all the kinds of plastic qualities as colours. She believes that the good painting should have wonderful, unworldly



Meena Baya, Acrylic on Canvas

Kiran Murdia, Oil on Canvas

Seema Chaturvedi, Oil on Paper

Surjeet Kaur Choyal, Oil on Canvas

Meena Baya, Acrylic on Canvas

and divine look and not the outer attraction only. The medium is not the aim of the painting. Thus, she creates a different identity in the contemporary art scenario of Rajasthan because of her different ideology. She creates folk and primitive art forms with the feel of semi-abstraction in a very contrived space. Veerbala Bhavsar's world of art has symbols of folk and village art, staircases, scripts of primitive art, remembrances, ruins are made with two dimensional quality forming a craft like image.

Veerbala Bhavsar selects particular aspects in the Rajasthani primitive art but having selected her subject it seems to the artist impossible to sit down to a tame imitation of the apparent. The reality is elsewhere, namely, in the painter's mind. The essence is intellectual and emotional, living as though she were a rich Rajasthani saga. Her paintings, as a whole, are a transmission of natural facts, as also of the sensational reality of the moment on her, everything has to be faithful to the sensational reality and which is registered on our own consciousness.

Kiran Murdia

A journey from semi-abstraction to works inspired by miniature painting-this is the path taken by Kiran Murdia. An interesting blend of textures, straight and wavy lines and miniature paintings is what attracts one to her works. Her recent works denote a blissful state of mind. One wonders and is curious to know what goes on in the artist's mind to take inspiration from miniature painting and make them fly in open space above geometrical forms which look like sky scrapers or at times fields. She composes miniature's buildings, Rajasthani forts with semi-abstract shapes by juxtaposing them on textured background. Textures are created by lifting the colours or scratching them from the ground, done in order to break the monotony of flat background.

Kiran Murdia, born in 1951 in Rajasthan has been interested in art since her childhood and had art as a subject during her academic career. Art is an ideal medium of conveying feelings and communicating and artist's inner expressions, imagination and creativeness. Her subject matter is simple and she expresses her aesthetic belief in artistic creativity with miniature impact. Kiran's paintings convey her own language of paint and brush subtly, suggestive of her fleeting moods, which she express as proudly by breaking the space of canvas. Use of pure and bright shades of colours, rhythmic and straight lines reflects excitement, movement, grace and charm of life. Her semi-abstract compositions are rich in colours. They produce dramatic effects in rhythmic movement. She respects her pictorial space and honours the moment of inspiration completely. Noted art critic S.N. Joshi has written about Kiran that –"Over the years Kiran Murdia has developed a distinct style of her own based on miniature tradition. For years, she exploited the inherent aesthetic elements from miniature painting and managed to overcast pleasing landscape imagery of Udaipur city. Even today, she paints landscape, but her intimate contact developed during all these years with objects like hills, rocks, water, springs and also flora and fauna of Udaipur has generated new

insight into the deeper meaning of the landscape. The Udaipur landscape still remains a source of reverie, but the centrifugal points in her new works are now accentuated by an abstract delineation". Prem Singh writes about her works- "Kiran creates 'Dream Composition', in which she especially uses bright red, green or blues." Presently she has changed the scenario of her paintings and has started painting with the use of roller, taking her towards abstraction.

Surjeet Kaur Choyal

Surjeet Kaur Choyal born in Jaipur in 1948 and studied at the Faculty of fine arts of M.S. University, Baroda in 1970-71. She has achieved national and international fame with her skillful works. By doing a totally different work from her husband Shail Choyal, Surjeet with her new technique creates figures dramatically on canvas, in somewhat surrealistic style. Crushed papers, drapery, some half appearing hands, human faces, rough surfaced walls, and also attraction towards such craked surfaces, where clothes are hung all occupy heart and mind of Surjeet, which turn at last into paintings. Since last decade bringing a major change in her works, she is now making her paintings with the help of old photographs of Raja-Maharajas which are being sold in the shop of Udaipur. She travelled through Holland, Belgium, Germany, Chechoslovakia, Australia, Switzerland, Itlay, France, Denmark and London. She had participated in almost all important exhibitions held in India such as L.K.A. New Delhi, AIFACS, Bombay Art Society etc. and in several invited shows by private galleries and also held several one man exhibition in metro cities and abroad. She has been awarded at the state and national level for her works. Her works have been acquired nationally and internationally.

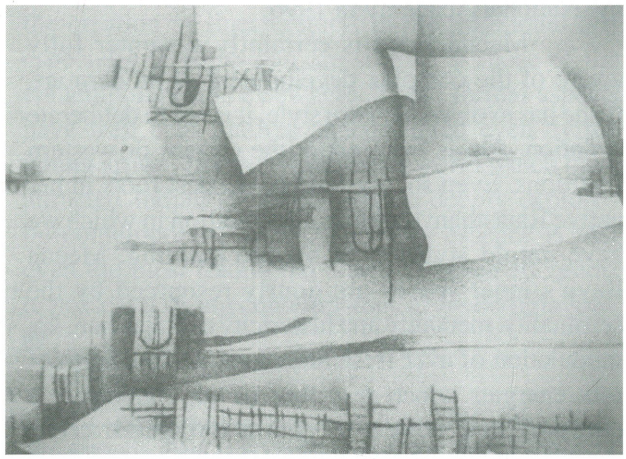
Meena Baya

Meena Baya born in Udaipur, Rajasthan, did her M.A in 1985 with Glod Medal. The paintings of Meena Baya, reflect the depth of her experiences, and are capable of saying many things through silent spectators. The live and talkative eyes of various figures in her paintings portray multifaceted upliftment of the downtrodden, protest the obstacles created in pursuing appropriate progressive opportunities, and narrate the touching untold stories of attempts at emerging from oppressive situations. The depth of experience that appears in Meena Baya's paintings was not a sudden phenomenon, but instead came about as a result of her long struggle with bitter-sweet experiences of life.

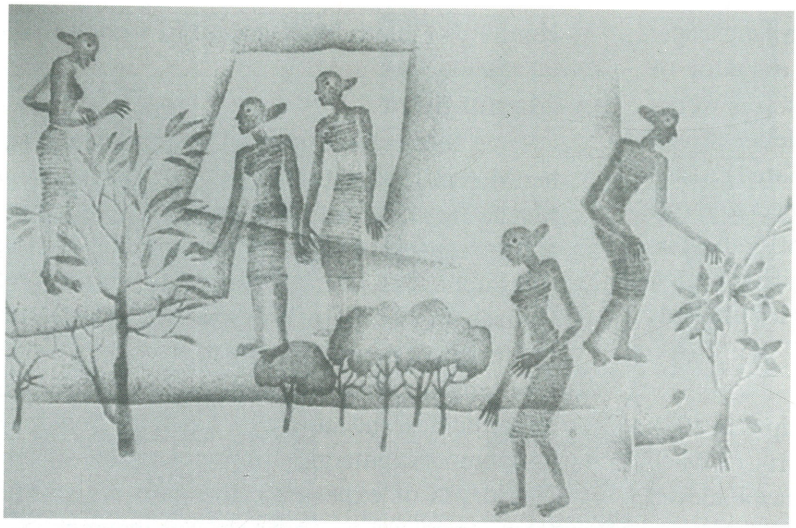
Meena Baya hails from a professional family, and no one in the past seven generations had been an artist. Despite the environment and thinking in her family, she chose the unimaginable part of creating an identity through her paintings. In doing so, she drafted a long story of charting her own path in difficult situations. The same is true of her journey of art too. She wanted to pursue an engineering career, but her father wanted her to become a doctor. Having survived the ambivalence of her father's directions and her own resolutions, she faced a lot of opposition in choosing art as her career. But this grew to be a challenge for Meena, and paintings along with the Sitar became witnesses of some of her most sensitive moments. With a resolution to identify herself through her work, she immersed herself into painting and music.

She had registered her presence among the

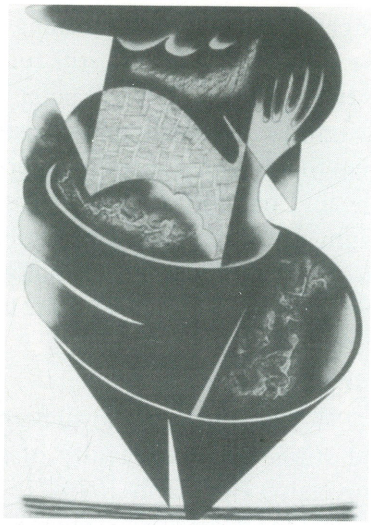
Surjeet Kaur Choyal, Oil on Canvas



Veerbala Bhavsar, Sand Medium



Veerbala Bhavsar, Sand Medium



Meena Srivastava, Mixed Media

painters of Rajasthan around in 1985 itself. At that time, she started with monochrome paintings, but the environs of Udaipur, the azure waters of her lakes, her verdant hills, and the blue school uniforms had something else to say to her. The result: blue and bright colours became her first choice; this was to become the first camp on her journey of art. She says – "Art has been a continuous journey for me and not a destination. My aesthetic vision is shaped by my innate response to the hard working people of Udaipur. In my painting, their elongated necks and wide-open eyes represent their dignity and self-esteem. My work also reflects the vivid colours of Rajasthan and the complexity of its landscape". Meena's work can be seen in the collection of state Academy, Jaipur, Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur, Sahitya Kala Parishad, New Delhi, Mumbai, Udaipur and in America etc. She is recipient of state Academy Award (Twice), Research Grant Award for Graphic by National Academy in 1996.

Meena Baya is certaintly a painter fully aware of the complex development of modern art. If she has evolved her own style, it is not in deliberate isolation, that is from either the eastern or western traditions. Even so, she has her deepest roots in her native Rajasthani tradition, the tradition in which we have untold styles of miniature painting. Meena Baya's inner spaces are dourly resourced by the spirituality, mentality and historicity of Rajasthan, via modulation of ever fresh and close – to the earth of folk energies which resurface in her canvas are a compact and cohesive vision balanced, cross referenced in varied expressive and meaningful activities of her own life. The work exudes a powerful visual impact.

Seema Chaturvedi

Seema Chaturvedi carries further to this series of women artists of Rajasthan, who have achieved fame nationally and internationally with their beautiful works. Myriad colours blend into seema's work, creating the over powering sensation of being caught in a Technicolour dream with their olive greens, melancholic pinks, fiery oranges and deep romantic blues. Her paintings clearly come from the heart.

Seema's art enters new vistas and makes the best of aesthetic freedom. Her paintings are impressive, and at the same time vigorous and inventive. She connects strongly with miniature paintings, as is evident by the frequent use of brush strokes of colours. Surely the artist has made herself familiar with the locale of her home state completely, by now, out of the depth of the sureness of this knowledge she creates compositions, which have the vital rhythm of lived life. Also, the vitality in certain of her figuration is an effect of movement of body. Thus a dynamic quality comes to inform these compositions. She says- "the skies were for me to rediscover, the earth was for me to uncover, nature was for me to unravel, and the mysteries of human relationship to unlock. I rediscover, uncovered, unraveled and unlocked. I have cought life not with any profound philosophic methodology. I have not squeezed wide life into some prosaic formulas. I have captured this mighty life with my little brush and paint

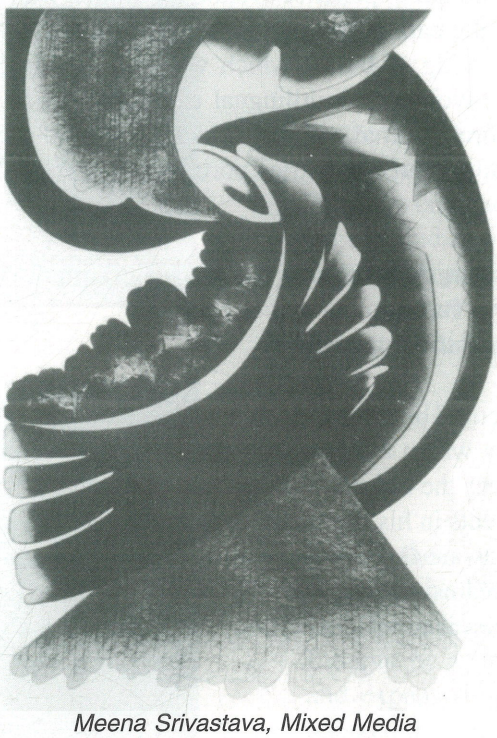
in the periphery of my humble canvas".

Thus, she has painted the colour of nature in all their vibrancy. In a figurative style, the paintings have a brightness of colours and images. She generally prefers painting the positive side of every theme. There are different hues of light in the work that she has played with keeping a pace with the movement and continuation in all the forms. The first stroke guides her through the canvas till the painting comes to finishing. In totality the colours of nature explore the innerself of this artist and she explores the hues that lead her into the unending world of images and forms.

Meenu Srivastava

Meenu Srivastva was born in 1975 in Rajasthan. Like most artists, Meenu's drawings in the formative stage were representational. In the present series she has totally banished all vestiges of figure paintings. She has reached a stage where she is fully independent as she does not have to use illustrative jottings, suggest a narrative through the visuals or implant some details form a myth for the purpose of luring the viewers. Like great nonfigurative painters, she has also used abstraction in paintings as it is used in music.

The postulate thoughts " time changes every things" remain oneself in illusion. Infact, a few things can never be change and in consideration of the belief towards value and faith becoming stronger than ever before. The simplicity of pre-civilization and complexities of ancient. Still has its relevancy. By knowingly or unknowingly in conscious or sub-conscious mind things remain around of us. Some time we have to accept behind an excuse of ritual and traditions. Presently we follow being fashionable or ultramodern. Meenu says about her works- "Dramatization of human gestures and mutual dialogue narrates the relationship in between human to human and human to nature. Alteration in monumental approaches has helped me to originate my own myths and fantasies that reveal achievable symbiotic existence of abstraction and realism".



Meena Srivastava, Mixed Media

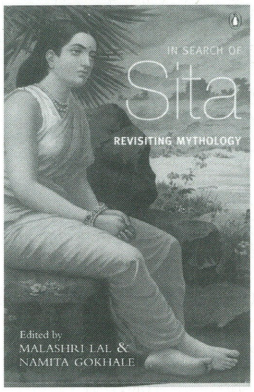
Diversification of surface add the charm and changed the whole scenario of an art work of Meenu. Though manifold makes magic and provide continuity, rhythm and three diamentional effect to surface yet the flat one has to furnish clam and rest. Her work has been exhibited in many solo and group shows covering all the major cities of India. Her work has been acquired by several institutions and private collection in and outside India.

Besides the artists as discussed so far, there are a number of other women artists' working at national and international levels. To name a few of them are Usha Rani Huja, Deepika Hazara, Prabha Shah, Indu Singh, Jaya Wheaton, Sapana Sharma, Rita Pratap, Archana Joshi, Rekha Panchola and Hemlata Kumawat. These are all struggling to position themselves on the modern map of art in Rajasthan. As the last words to say, Indian art has always been conceptually related even in the formal approach. Various pictorial devices such as visual form, language, symbolic and expressive colour and the creation of linear effects in the traditional arts especially of Rajasthan are similar to those of the contemporary arts elsewhere. These formal aspects have well been studied and mastered even by the young artists. Images of the inner world which have attracted Indian artists have been deeply explored by contemporary artists. The only essence is that even the most traditional and folk based art seems to possess a strong contemporary or modern flavour. ■

Dr. Archana Rani is an artist and writer. She teaches in RG (PG) College, Meerut.

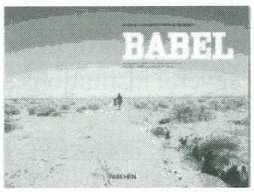
BOOK REVIEW

Santanu Ganguly



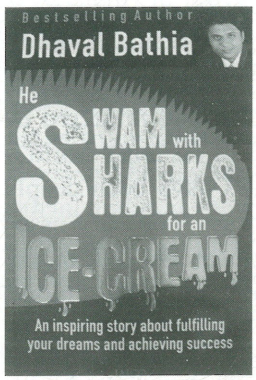
Title : **In Search of Sita**
Edited by : **Malashri Lal & Namita Golekha**
Publisher : **Penguin / Yatra**

Sita is one of the defining figures of Indian womanhood, yet there is no single version of her story. Different accounts coexist in myth, literature and folktale. Canonical texts deify Sita while regional variations humanize her. Folk songs and ballads connect her timeless predicament to the daily lives of rural women. Modern-day women continue to see themselves reflected in films, serials and soap operas based on Sita's narrative.



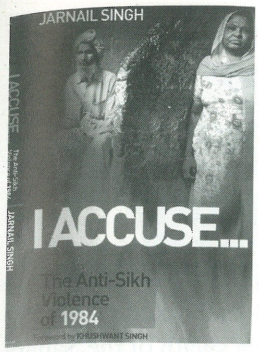
Title : **Babel**
Edited by : **Alejandro González Iñárritu**
Publisher : **Taschen**

Mexican film director Alejandro Gonzalezs Inarritu, along with top photographers Merry Ellen Mark, Patrick Bard, Graciela Iturbide, and Miguel Rio Branco, bring together their highly perceptive vision on cultural diversity in a book that combines seductive images and the director's firsthand remarks on the unique experience of shooting Babel. This book is visual recollection of the parallel stories and real-life characters that revolved around the marking of Babel, which was shot in Morocco, Mexico and Japan and involved a multilingual cast led by Brad Pitt, Cate Blanchett, Geal Garcia Bernal and Koji Yakusho as well as non-professional actors from the three countries portrayed.



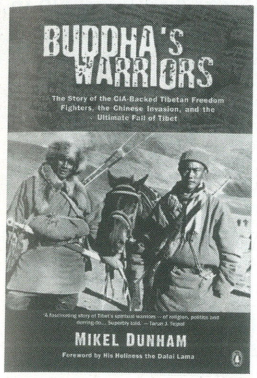
Title : **He Swam with Sharks for an Ice-cream**
Author : **Dhaval Bathia**
Pubulisher : **Jaico Publishing House**

In an ancient village, a retired billionaire possesses a secret diary! Within its pages are insights by which a person can attract fame, wealth and success. For over decades the old man has preserved the diary, but an unexpected series of events in his life has now forced him to reveal its contents. He is deeply aware that whosoever reads it will acquire the power to fulfill all his dreams and reach his destiny. However, he knows that this priceless wisdom is not for everybody, only for a few chosen ones !



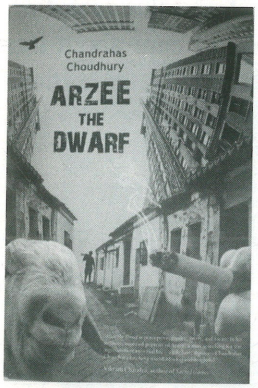
Title :**I accuse...The Anti Sikh Violence of 1984**
Author : **Jarnail Singh**
Publisher : **Viking / Penguin**

The unanswered questions, the justice delayed, the unbearable memories- the three days of 1984 when over 3000 Sikhs were slaughtered, have indelibly marked the lives of thousands more who continue to exist in a twilight of bitterness and despair. It was outrage at this state of affairs that led Jarnail Singh, an unassuming, law- abiding journalist, to throw his shoe at home minister P Chidambaram during a press conference in New Delhi. He readily acknowledges that this was not an appropriate means of protest, but asks why, twenty-five years after the massacres, so little has been done to address the issues that are still unresolved and unanswered and a source of anguish to the whole community.



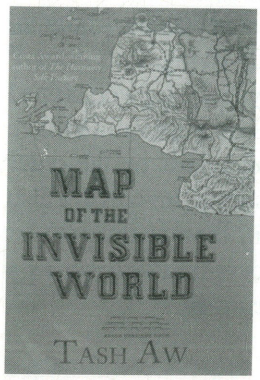
Title : **Buddha's Warriors**
Author : **Mikel Dunham**
Publisher : **Penguin**

In the last sixty years, Tibet has been so mythologized and politicized that the outside world remains confused about what really happened when Mao Tse-tung invaded in 1950. Buddha's Warriors is the story of the tens of thousands of Tibetans who violently resisted the bloody occupation of their country and the desecration of all that was holy to them. From the farthest reaches of Tibet—Kham, Amdo and Golok—the most feared tribes in Asia mounted their warhorses and rode together for the first time in history.



Title : **Arzee the Dwarf**
Author : **Chandrahas Choudhury**
Publisher : **HarperCollins**

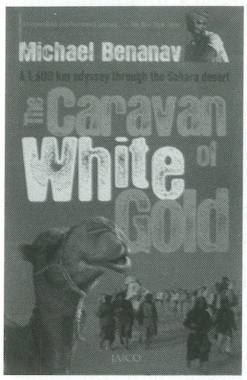
Arzee the Dwarf is the story of the doubly marginalized Arzee – a half-Hindu half Muslim midget who works as a projectionist in a decrepit Bombay cinema theatre called Noor. It is about Arzee's extraordinary urge to find an ordinary life. As Arzee curses his stars and retreats from life, he is kept from sinking entirely into a morass of self-pity by a series of encounters - with Deepak the gangster, with old Phiroz, the outgoing head projectionist of the Noor, and his daughter Shireen.



Title : **Map of the Invisible World**
Author : Tash Aw
Publisher : **HarperCollins**

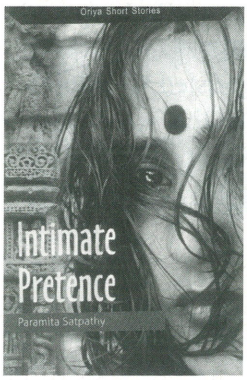
During their years together in the orphanage Johan keeps a constant vigil over his little brother Adam - he's all he's got. But they are placed in different adoptive homes and lose all contact. Johan is taken to Kuala Lumpur by a wealthy Malaysian couple, to a life of smart restaurants and expensive cars, whilst Adam remains in Indonesia where he is adopted in by a Dutch painter, Karl, and finds himself growing up in a

simple coastal town. Adam often thinks of his brother, but as the years pass, the memories become less painful, and he adapts to his new life..



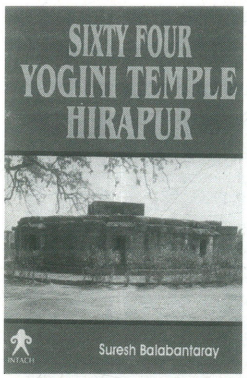
Title : **The Caravan of White Gold**
Author : **Michael Benanav**
Pubulisher : **Jaico Publishing House**

Driven to get a glimpse of an ancient way of life before it disappeared from the planet forever, author Michael Benanav embarked on a 1600 kilometer odyssey by foot and by camel, through a swath of the Sahara Desert so deadly it's called 'The Land of Terror' by the nomads who cross it. Joining up with the caravan of white gold – one of the last working camel caravans in the world – he followed an age-old trade route, transporting gleaming slabs of solid rock salt from mines deep in the desert to the market in Timbuktu. Once literally worth its weight in gold, which gives the caravan its name, the salt today is worth just pennies a pound, but men still risk their lives to haul it and sell it.



Title : **Intimate Pretence**
Author : **Paramita Satpathy**
Pubulisher : **Rupa & Co.**

Intimate Pretence is a collection of fourteen short stories by Paramita Satpathy. Translated from Oriya by the author and few others, the stories address the recurring problems of the booming middle-class of Orissa. The plight of the modern woman has been delineated with utmost perfection. Be it about the evergreen forgotten love, the unending loneliness, or the doting mother who never fails to care about her worthless son. The author also digs deep into the deceit of women, their frivolity and infidelity, and also the grievance of the mother who lost herson in the Kargil war.

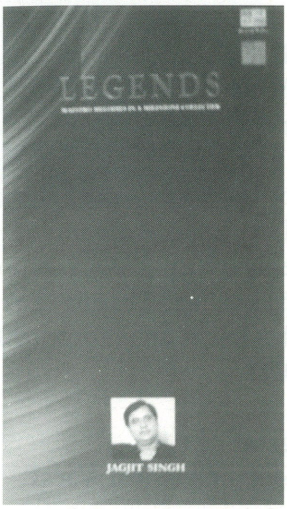


Title : **Sixty Four Yogini Temple Hirapur**
Author : **Suresh Balabantaray**
Pubulisher : **Bahi Patra**

The sixty-four Yogini temple ofHirapur is smallest among all the hypaethral temples found in India and unique of its kind. The Yogini images are carved in grey chlorite stone and bear the hallmark of Orissan architectural style and grandeur. Their hair styles and Vahans (mounts) are different with every Yogini image. It is the only living Sixty-four Y ogini temple in the country where Y ogini Mohamaya is being worshipped as the presiding deity and serves the role of the Grama Devati (Village Goddess) in the locality. The images of nine Katyayanis on the outer wall, two Dvarapalas on the doorway and two vestibule images are also the uniqueness of this shrine. This publication will cater to the popular knowledge of the tourists and the common readers and will act as a stepping stone for the researchers of the Yogini cult. ■

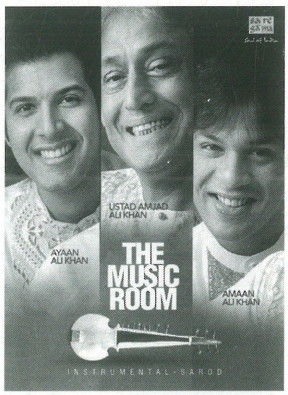
MUSIC REVIEW

Santanu Ganguly



Album : **Legends- Jagjit Singh- Maestro Melodies in a Milestone Collection**
Music : **Saregama**
Price : **Rs. 1000/-**

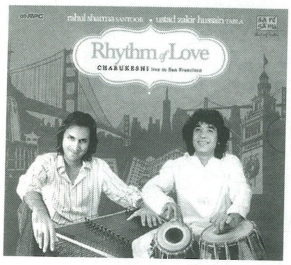
Saregama, India's largest and oldest music company is proud to announce the release of Legends - Jagjit Singh. This premium series brings you a representative selection of the entire career of a legendary artiste in a 5CD collectors' pack, focusing on the milestones in the maestro's oeuvre. An accompanying booklet adds value to the pack. The tracks are handpicked from Saregama's historic archives. Jagjit Singh, the ghazal maestro who reinvented this light classical form with more contemporary, pop influenced instrumentation, is also an inspiring singer of devotional songs. These five CDs showcase him at his best, singing well known ghazals and bhajans both from films and from his non-film albums.



Album : **The Music Room**
Artist : **Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, Amaan Ali Khan & Ayaan Ali Khan**
Music : **Saregama**
Price : **Rs. 450/-**

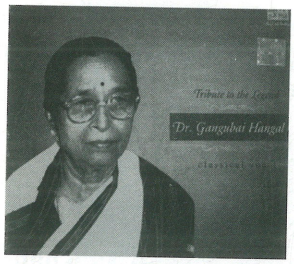
The music room is where the guru educates and guides his shishyas, and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan is very much the guru to his sons Amaan and Ayaan - even when, as he says, he would sit them on his lap during lessons when they were still infants! On this CD the emphasis has been to keep the pieces short and tight, without sacrificing the identity and feel of the raga. This makes it more accessible to younger listeners. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan is the best known name in sarod today. Taught by his father Haafiz Ali Khan, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan was born to the illustrious Bangash lineage rooted in the Senia Bangash School of music. Today he shoulders the sixth generation inheritance of this legendary lineage; and his sons are poised to continue the legacy. He performs regularly at all the most prestigious classical festivals and venues both in India and abroad. Ustad Amjad Ali Khan has the privilege of winning many honours and citations.
Talking about this unusual album, a first of its kind, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan says -

'There are many recordings of the three of us playing together but none where I am playing individually with Amaan and individually with Ayaan. In this series, we present some timeless ragas in some very interesting taals. This is our family's humble offering to the world of music.'



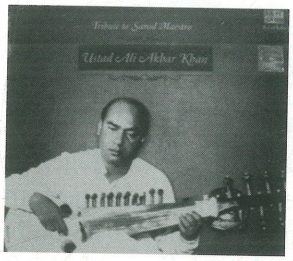
Album	:	**Rhythm of Love - Charukeshi Live in San Francisco**
Artists	:	**Rahul Sharma & Zakir Husain**
Music	:	**Saregama**
Price	:	**Rs. 225/-**

Rhythm of Love - Charukeshi Live in San Francisco featuring Rahul Sharma on santoor and Ustad Zakir Husain on tabla. The pack includes a write up by Rahul Sharma. A whirlwind tour of key cities in the US, an exciting road trip with Zakir Husain at the wheel and Rahul Sharma navigating, a magical concert at San Francisco - these are the ingredients that come together in this special live recording. Enjoy the entire raga Charukeshi, with Rahul Sharma playing a deeply romantic composition created by his father, the legendary Pandit Shivkumar Sharma. Zakir Husain's expert touch on the tablas ensures that this is an unforgettable performance, now captured for posterity on CD.



Album	:	**Tribute to the Legend Dr. Gangubai Hangal - Classical Vocal**
Music	:	**Saregama**
Price	:	**Rs. 450/-**

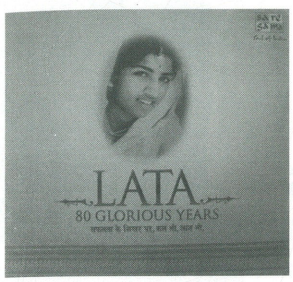
Dr. Gangubai's uncompressing attitude towards music makes her the only purist of the Kirana Gharana. She steadfastly stuck to her beliefs and only sang classical music. She was born in Dharwad on 5th March 1913 and was initiated into music by her mother Ambabai, took her early training under Hulgur Krishnacharya. Being the senior most disciple of Pt. Sawai Gandharva she presented her music with utmost devotion thus making her a doyen of Kirana Gharana. Her Majestic and pliable voice allowed her to express the range and subtitles of a raga with utmost ease and great impact. All the tracks from the CD 1 are 78 RPM recording from the early 1030's and CD 2 contains raga Abhogi is considered a masterpiece of the Kirana Gharana.



Album	:	**Tribute to Sarod Maestro**
Artists	:	**Ustad Ali Akbar Khan**
Music	:	**Saregama**
Price	:	**Rs. 450/-**

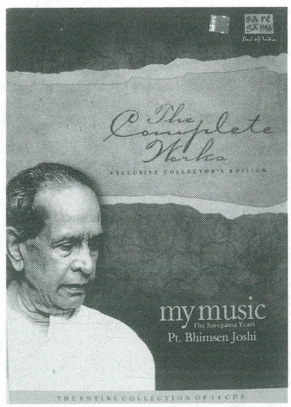
A doyen of Maihar Gharana, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, one of the most accomplished Indian classical musicians, designated a 'Living National Treasure' in India. Yehudi Menuhin hailed him as 'the greatest musician in the world'. The CD 1 contains Raga Chandranandan recorded in 1962 is typically a Maihar Gharana Raga. Making this CD special are the plethora of Ragas and Ustad Zakir Hussain's accompaniment in the

concluding Raga Durgeshwari. The CD 2 contains the morning Raga Todi is followed by Raga Lajwanti, yet another favourite of Maihar Gharana. The concluding Raga Sindhu Bhairavi is an alap in Thumri style and is a jugalbandi with legendary Pt. Ravi Shankar. Both Khan saheb and Panditji represent the last few legendary artistes who brought forth their genius and have given Indian Classical Music its due on the world stage.



Album	:	**Lata: 80 Glorious years**
Artist	:	**Lata Mangeshkar**
Music	:	**Saregama**
Price	:	**Rs. 1599/-**

"What does one say about the most inspiring living legend that our country can boast of? The artiste who has received every conceivable honour the world has to offer, including the Bharat Ratna... the artiste who has become an indelible part of our lives, bringing us happiness and solace through hr divine voice...the artiste who has an unparalleled success story of being at the pinnacle of the music world ever since she began her career 67 years ago. It is said that people follow music, but in Lataji's case it can be said that music follows her. Indeed she has written musical history in the most fascinating 80 years that she has lived" - veteran filmmaker Yash Chopra paid his tribute to the living legend Lata Mangeshkar on the album - Lata: 80 Glorious years. On the occasion of the 80th Birth day of the artist Saregama released a sets of eight CDs contains ten songs each, all together eighty songs by Lata Mangeshkar and other legendary singers with a beautiful album of the various moods of the artist, a perfect collector's collection.

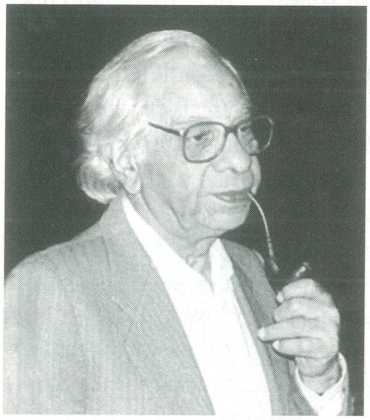


Album	:	**The Complete Works - My Music: The Saregama years**
Artist	:	**Pt. Bhimsen Joshi**
Music	:	**Saregama**
Price	:	**Rs. 1999/-**

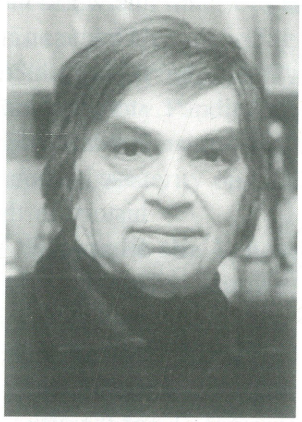
Pt. Bhimsen Joshi is the most outstanding and popular Hindustani Classical Vocalist. This doyen of the Kirana gharana has swayed audiences all over India and abroad for over half a century. The central aspects of his impact lies in his stupendous voice. The collection of Pt. Bhimsen Joshi's recording go back to the days of the 78 RPM. CDs 1 to 10 consist of every classical recording done by Panditji for Saregama. Cds 11 to 14 highlight his other musical facets from ranging from devotional duets with Lata Mangeshkar, his role as a playback singer and music composer to his renditions in Kannada and Marathi. The series concludes with renditions by Pt. Sawai Gandharva, Pt. Bhimsen Joshi's erstwhile Guru and two renditions by the doyen of the Kirana gharana, Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, the 'Paratpar Guru' (his Guru's Guru)! The set of fourteen CD are the must collection item for every music connoisseurs. ■

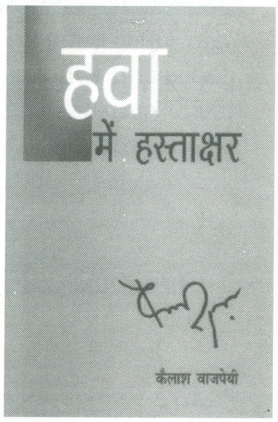
KALEIDOSCOPE

SAHITYA AKADEMI AWARDS



Chaturvedi Badrinath and his book in English





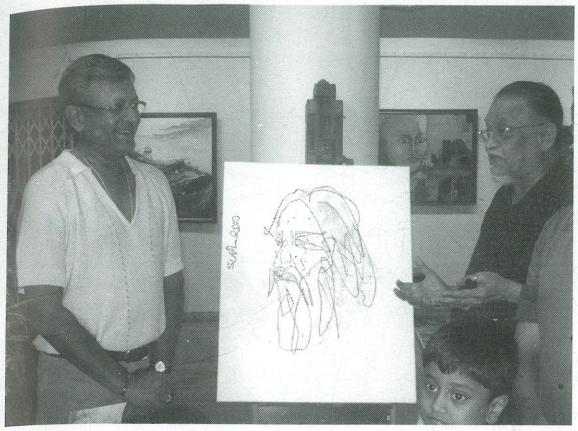
Kailash Vijpeyi and his book in Hindi

Sahitya Akademi award winning book in English 'The Mahabharata: an Inquiry in the Human Condition' by Chaturvedi Badrinath dispels several false chains about what is today known as 'Hinduism' to show how individual liberty and knowledge, freedom, equality and celebration of love, friendship and relationships are integral to philosophy of the Mahabharata because they are integral to human life. As such, this book is considered an extraordinary contribution to Indian critical literature in English.

Badrinath, born in Mainpuri, U.P. in 1933 is a philosopher and has served as a member of the Indian Administrative Service from 1958 to 1989 at Tamil Nadu. Beside Chaturvedi Badrinath, the Akademi award winners were- *Dhruba Jyoti Borah(Assamese), Sourin Bhattacharya (Bengali), Late Manoranjan Lahary(Bodo) , Praduman Singh Jindrahia(Dogri), Shirish J.Panchal (Gujrati), Kailash Vajpeyi(Hindi), Vaidehi (Kannada), Mishal Sultanpuri (Kashmiri), Jess Fernandes(Konkani), Late Man Mohan Jha(Maithili), U.S. Khader(Malayalam), Raghu Leishangthem(Manipuri), Abaji Dahake (Marathi), Samiran Chhetri Priyadarshani (Nepali), Phani Mohanty (Oriya), Atamjit (Punjabi), Ratan Jangid(Rajasthani), Prashasya Mitra Shastri(Sanskrit), Damayanti Beshra (Santali), Anand Khemani(Sindhi), Puviyarasu (Tamil), Yarlagadda Lakshmi Prasad(Telugu), Abdul Kalam Qasmi(Urdu).*

'Hawa Main Hasthakshar' the collection of poems by Kailash Vajpeyi, is a testament of his command over the poetic idiom and the maturity of his intellect. The artistry of the poet has deepened, the breath of his humanity has found a new compelling voice and the poems leave a strong impression on the reader. This is a notable collection of poetry and is considered a significant contribution to Indian poetry in Hindi. ■

POETRY OF COLOUR



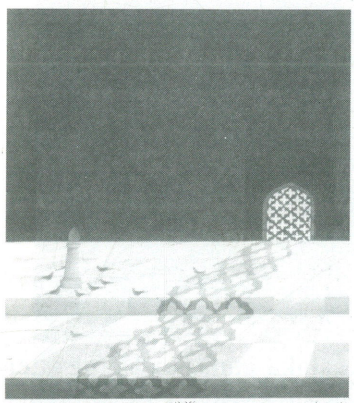
Poetry of Colour is a group of artists from Dhanbad, showcasing more than thirty paintings in the exhibition at Birla Academy (Kolkata). Few years back a handful of artist-friends met on a coal area like Dhanbad to start what was then supposed to be a painter's group. Their geographies vary, but their intentions are the same to explore their artistic impression and their successes have not gone unnoticed. What is interesting about the group is that a first glance, it is not so much figures and landscape but a riot of colours, relation between colours, transmuting into varied interpretation. Debajyoti Sarkar, is the senior most, is somewhat exceptional. His works speak for themselves. His paintings do not have a presence. They are the presence. Using 'part fantasy' and part 'neo-realistic' techniques, the artist creates on canvas a misty surreal imagery. A sense of magic realism permeates in his artworks. Sanjeev Kumar, an I.F.S officer (Dhanbad), creates a dynamic landscape with green colours in a naturalistic style. Pulokesh Mondal is the only artist from Delhi in their group. All his figures are textured, seemingly like a gauze veil which gives it an air of mystery. Subrata Roy Chowdhury's painting depicts a sense of exhilarating reality. The only printmaker in their group is Binita Bandyopadhay. Rampujan Sing divides his canvas into various shapes. Suparna Mitra's customary images break new ground with her style. Other young artists who participated in this exhibition are Rajib Sarkar, Bhanu Grohocharjee, Soma Chatterjee and Suman Roy. They all are groping through the tradition of modernism to hone their own tone. Eminent artist Sunil Das and art lover Aditya kumar Bajoria inaugurated the show. ■

ABHIVYAKTI

Milan Sharma

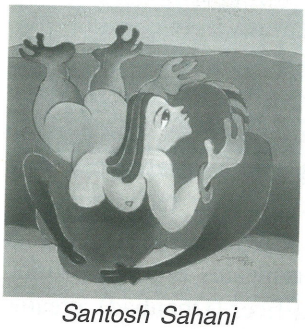
They were eleven. Not a football team, but a team of artists who put up their recent works of painting and drawings under 'Abhivyakti' at Lalit Kala Akademi galleries. They were Amit Kumar, Ishwar Chand, Kahkashan Parveen, Milan Sharma, Nibha Mishra, Pooja Kushwaha, Rohit Verma, Shefali Bhatnagar, Shikha Ojha, Umesh Kumar Saxena and Vivek Shukla.

The painted surfaces of the works of Milan Sharma tend to get blurred as if they were being viewed in a haze. There is a sensuous appeal. The desire world has taken shape very carefully keeping in view good color sense and proportion. In Kahkashan Parveen's work, the graces of a hallowed past being seen in amplitude in arcades and porticos. A well balanced work and goes against the missionaries to castigate all bygone arts and then improve the world of present. But here the past peeps in. ■

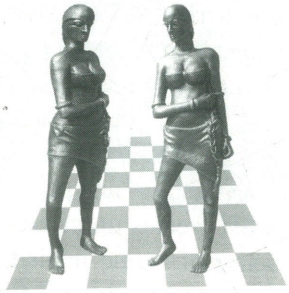


Kahkashan Parveen

CHATUR GOON PRAKRITI



Santosh Sahani



Sandeep Pal

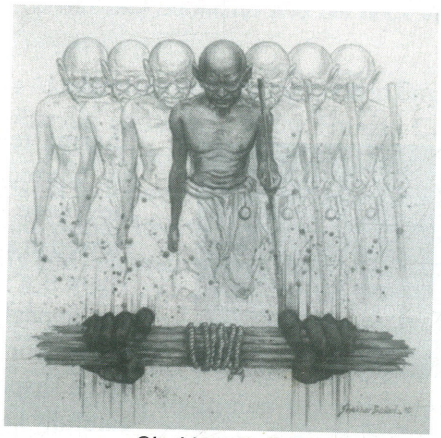
Rajesh Harsh

Chandana Bhattacharjee

Chandana Bhattacharjee, Rajesh Harsh, Santosh Kumar Sahani, Sundeep Pal organized a group show titled 'Chatur Goon Prakriti' at AIFACS gallery, New Delhi from 1st August to 7th August,2010. The show was inaugurated by Dr.Karan Singh.

A traveler inside Rajesh Harsh takes him to different places in his dreams as well as daily life. He is a great lover of nature. The colors prevalent in his surrounding arrests him, inspires him. The present show of him is dedicated to the vast green world. The flexible figures of Santosh Sahani are interesting. They highlight that life is a play and enjoy life to the fullest. Sandeep Pal's Shatranj revolves around woman's evolution – how from timidity she has grown to the power centre of the society with wisdom. On the other hand Chandana Bhattacharjee highlights the softness and honesty of woman with offering of flower for the inner happiness. ■

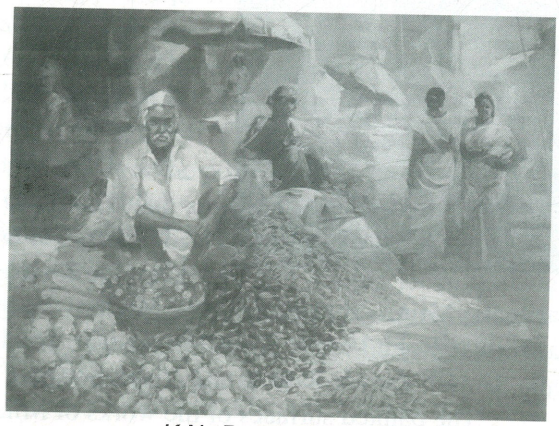
VARNA SANGAMA



Shekhar Ballari

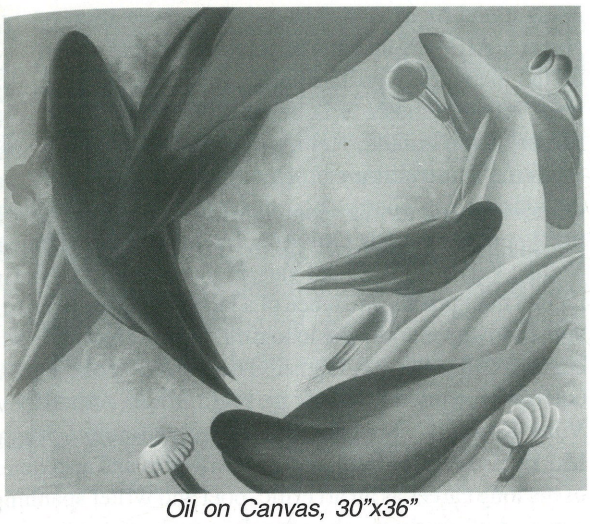
Six artists from Karnataka came to Delhi after exhibiting their works at Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad, Bangalore and showcased their works at Open Palm Court, India Habitat Centre. They were K.N. Ramachandran, B.S. Desai, K.G. Lingadevaru, Ganesh Doddamani, Chandrashekar and Shekar Ballari.

K.N. Ramachandran's oil on canvases have enliven the transgressed people. He has successfully illuminated the distinct facets of the market place and people. He manifests humanity intermedially in the context of disturbed life source. His drawing, color sense, light study and space management is superb and his creation has a mass appeal. The magic of Gandhi ji in acrylic on canvas is very timely in this period of politics of land, people, power and money. United we stand, says Shekhar Ballari. He warns not to be divided and fall. ■



K.N. Ramachandran

V.L. MEVADA



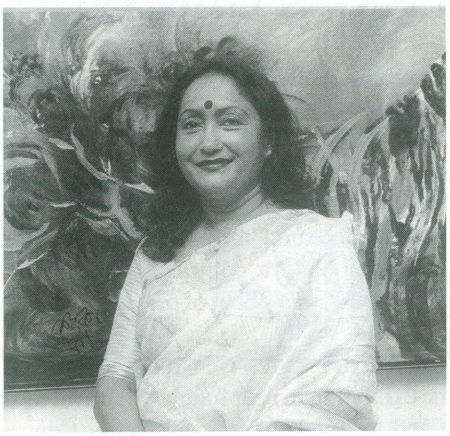
Oil on Canvas, 30"x36"

Gallery Indraprastha in the recent past showcased the works of V.L. Mevada at its gallery in Lado Sarai, New Delhi.

V.L. Mevada's command over both the genres of drawing and painting is commendable. He is able to achieve in painterly terms, works which carry emotive intent of his own and offer a space to concentrate and meditate.

With clear and edged contours of his images, he gives them a feel of certain lightness and thus they seem to float in the pictorial space and create movements for the eye and mind. Mevada uses three or four dominant colors and by contrasting them offers multiple planes. His paintings have a dream like quality and can shift the viewers attention from his immediate reality to a state of imagination. ■

SHUKLA CHOWDHURY'S SOLO EXHIBITION



Shukla Chowdhury

'The phoenix sings a song ...II – the eternal harmony...' is the title of senior artist Shukla Chowdhury's 9th solo show at Lalit Kala Akademi galleries from 4th to 10th August,2010.

'...When the self culminates its journey in the real world, the phoenix is reminded of the momentariness of life. Only a moment is what the self is. Time is a collection of many such moments and hence, even when nothing of the self exists, the universe lives on.

The infinite sky is the phoenix's abode, from where it pores over the glorious natural world. But it realizes this glory lasts only a moment in the eternal harmony of life. The phoenix desires, thus, to seek the shrine of life's absolute truth. This is a quest which it undertakes to merge its understanding of the transience of the self and the immortality of the universe. The phoenix is both, the moment and the universe. ■

Twist and turns, 24"x30"

R .S. YADAV TURNS 82

Birthday of Sh. R .S. YADAV
(Second from left) celebrated at AIFACS

Eight Delhi artists decided to come together to put up a group show of their works at AIFACS for three days, from 13th July to 15th July, 2010 in honour of Shri R S Yadav, the well known art critic who turned 82 on 13th July, 2010. The exhibition opened on 13th July and was inaugurated by Shri R S Yadav. In appreciation of this gesture, AIFACS also came forward to host a tea party on the inaugural day. The artists who formed this group were Ranjan Ghosh, S K Sahani, Prem Singh, Santosh Verma, Jivan Adalja, Hemraj, Koya N K P Muthu and Shovin Bhattacharya. On the ocassion of the inauguration, a poetry session was organised in which many poets, Suresh Dhingra, Pavan Mathur, Umesh Verma, Vigyan Vrat, Sushil Vats, Pratap Singh and Ashwin recited their poems. Presence of a large gathering of artists and art lovers marked the inaugural ceremony which was conducted by Ranjan Ghosh. Those who spoke on the occasion included S K Sahani, Prem Singh, Anand Dev, Vijay Kowshik , Suresh Dhingra and Paramjeet Singh. Mr. Yadav outlined interesting experiences and anecdotes of his long career as an art critic, poet and writer spanning a period of nearly six decades. It is perhaps for the first time in recent times that an exhibition of paintings has been organised in collaboration with AIFACS to pay tributes to a veteran critic who has been around in the art world for such a long time. ■

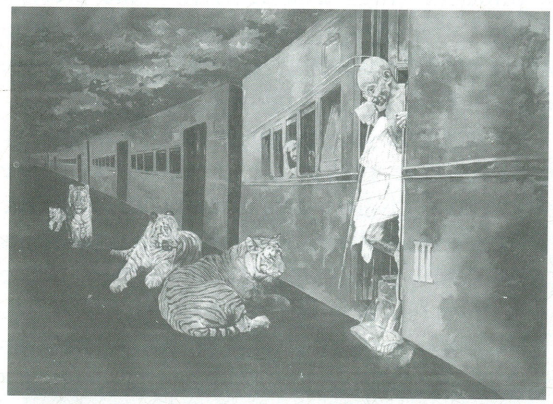
PROGRESSIVE ART GALLERY'S GANDHI

Rajesh Srivastava

'Gandhi Through The Eyes of The Artists' was a group show of paintings and suclpures held by Progressive Art Gallery at Alliance Francaise , New Delhi from 8th to 12th October, 2010. The exhibition showed the works of 15 artists, including two photographers ie. Deepak Tandon and Sarabjit Babra. Beside them the participating artists were Ram Kinker Baij, Vijay Kowshik, Pramod Ganpatye, Sidharth, Rajesh Srivastava, Dipto Narayan Chatterjee, Bhubaneshwar Bhaskar, Manas Jena, Meghans Thapa, Siraj Saxena, Kumar Ranjan, Charanjeet Singh, Kamalkant, Kishore Roy and Kishan Duriseti.

The exhibition was a humble homage to the father of the nation. In one of Rajesh Srivastav's works, Gandhi's face seems to arise from the very soil of India – its fields, rivers, forests and rural homes. Dipto Narayan Chatterjee in his work created a contrast and dramatic tension between Gandhi as a symbol of peace and tigers as symbol of imperial violence.

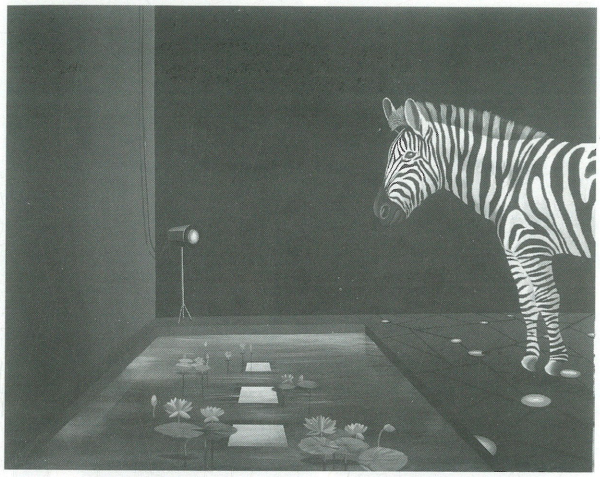
R.N.Singh of Progressive Art has ambitious plans. He says the exhibition in near future will travel to Wardha (in India) and to South Africa and Nehru Centre, London (outside India). ■



Dipto Narayan Chatterjee

DIS / MIS PLACED

In recent past Gopal Samantray organized his solo show titled 'Dis/Mis placed' at Triveni Gallery. In Gopal's canvases one could see cranes, zebras, tigers and other animals placed outside their original habitat as if they have become mute representative of life. Unchecked urbanization, encroachments, modern life style have resulted in destroying the harmony between the nature and human being. Gopal has hammered on the ecological concerns and the myopic and selfish ideas of development. The concepts and treatments of this young artist are interesting and can not be overlooked. ■



THE LIVING INSIGNIA BY GALLERY ENSIGN

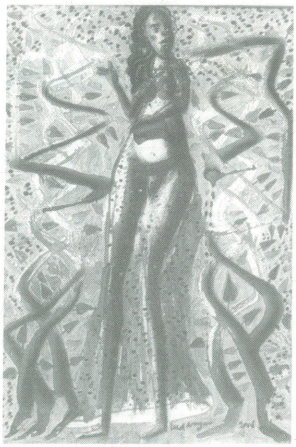
Gogi Soraj Pal

P. Khemraj

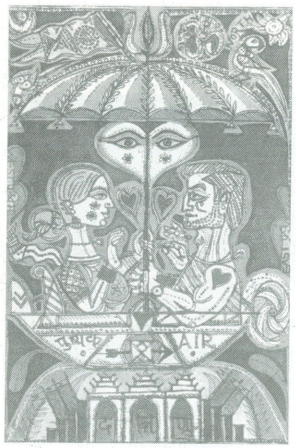
'The living insignia' is a curatorial conjunction initiated by Seema Subbanna at the inaugural of her new art space- 'Gallery Ensign' located in Neetibagh, New Delhi, essentially is an effort to locate the herald of the Modern Indian Art. In this show, twenty-one revered names of Indian Art have put together their paper works.

Says Seema- 'Art has many aspects and many ways of representation. However, drawings and paper works are like the signature of the artist which is highly personalized and cannot be manipulated'. Irrespective of the recent downturn Indian art market faced, a courageous commitment to a grounded vision of art will survive. Artists who have made a difference and defined the core of Indian Art are the ones who have apparently stood the test of time. And this in turn will bring hopefully stability to the market profile of India globally.

The participating artists were – A Ramachandran, Arpana Caur, Chameli Ramachandran, C.Jagdish, Gogi Soraj Pal, Jogen Chowdhary, Jyoti Bhatt, K.R. Subbanna, K.G. Subranmanyam, Laxma Goud, P.Khemraj, Rabin Mondal, R.B. Bhaskaran, S.G. Vasudev, Sanat Kar, Sakti Burman, Samir Aich, Surya Prakash, Sunil Das, Vaikuntam and Ved Nayar. ■

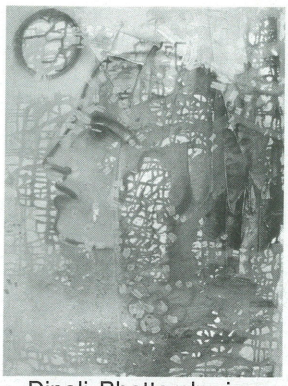


Ved Nayar



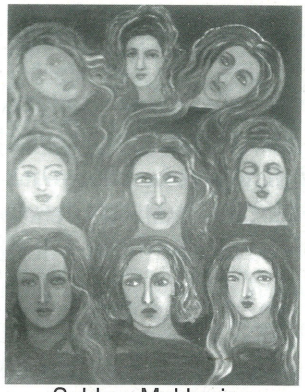
Jyoti Bhatt

ART EXHIBITION BY INCOME TAX DEPARTMENT



Dipali Bhattarcharjee

Dhiraj Choudhury



Subhra Mukherjee

Niren Sengupta

Wasim Kapoor

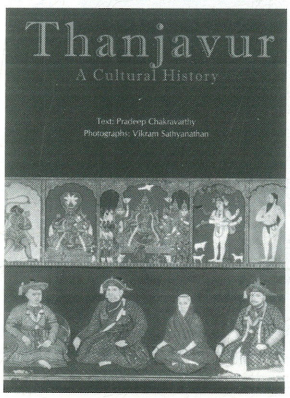
Nand Katyal

On the occasion of 150th year of existence of Income Tax in India, Income Tax Department organized Art Workshop on the theme of 'Building the nation through Income Tax' at the Art Gallery of the historic Town Hall of Kolkata on 12th & 13th July 2010. In this many eminent artists including Dhiraj Chowdhury, Ganesh Haloi, Jogen Choudhury, Prakash Karmakar, Sunil Das and Wasim Kapoor participated. The art workshop was followed by an exhibition which ended on 16th July,2010.

An exhibition in Delhi was also oragnised from 14th to 29th July at AIFACS.

Through this unique thematic art exhibition and art camp, perhaps the first of its kind in the world each artist has attempted to interpret an abstract subject like 'finance and taxation' so as to inspire and motivate citizens to actively participate in the process of nation building. ■

BOOK LAUNCH

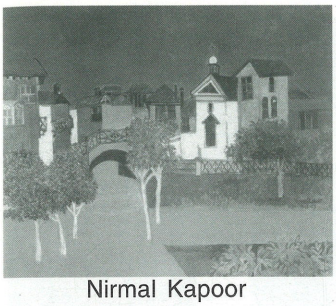


A good book always inspires. It becomes a philosopher and guide and pushes away the darkness surrounding us. As a result knowledge and wisdom come to us in abundance.

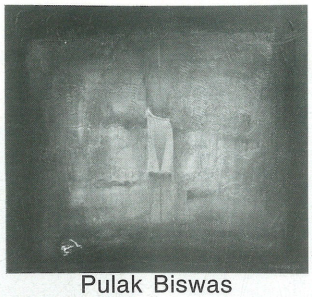
A book titled 'Thanjavur – A cultural History' written by Pradeep Chakravarthy is going to be launched on 16th December,2010 at Vivanta Connemara, Chennai by Niyogi Books and Madras Book Club.

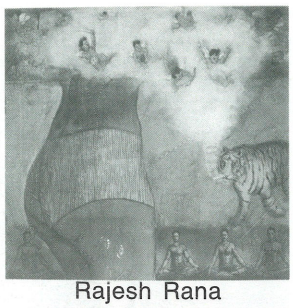
Ms. Leela Samson, Director Kalakhetra Foundation & Chairperson, Sangeet Natak Akademi will be the Chief Guest and Mr. S. Babaji Rajah Bhonsle, Descendant of Thanjavur Maratha Dynasty will be the Guest of Honour. ■

ARTISTS CAMP BY AIFACS

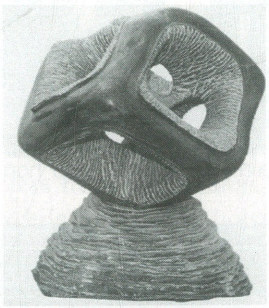

Nirmal Kapoor

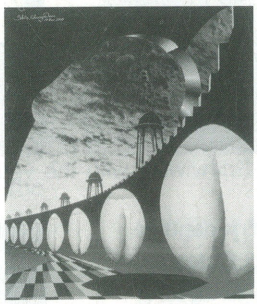
K.P. Chindambarakrishanan


Pulak Biswas


Rajesh Rana

Paramjeet Singh


Anup Mandal


Shin Chang Woon

Venu Gopal

D. Marandi

All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society organized an exhibition of paintings and sculptures created by artists at All India Senior Artists, Junior Artists and Sculptors camp. The exhibition was inaugurated by the president of AIFACS Padmashree Ram V. Sutar.

One of the most important activities of AIFACS is art camps. The society for wider participation has divided the camps into two parts 1. Senior Artists camp comprising artists of 45 years of age and above 2. Junior artists camp comprising artists of below 45 years. This year 92 artists participated in Senior Artists Camp out of which 33 artists came from different states of the country. In junior artists camp 81 artists participated out of which 42 came from different states. In the sculptors camp, 8 sculptors participated. ■

KAHE KABIR

Ritu Chopra, Maya, Mixed Media on Canvas, 38"x54"

"Everything shapes slowly, dear heart. The gardener profusely waters the plant, but the fruits appears only during their season."

Ritu Chopra exhibited her paintings in October at Arpana Caur Academy of Fine Arts & Literature, New Delhi based on the couplets from Saint Kabir. She was very much influenced by the philosophy of Kabir and Linda Hess's book 'Singing Emptiness'. So words like 'Self Realization', Jhini Jhini Bini Chadariya -11, 'Maya', 'Magan Maan', 'Atonement', 'Vaishnav', 'Wishing Konts', 'Spiritual Thought of Creativity' took shape. Her paintings mostly were figurative and had the tone of spiritualism. Her works had the magical power of interacting directly with the viewers because of the fine handling of the images. ■

DELHI COLLAGE OF ART

Principal Ashwani Kumar Prithviwasi with the veterain artists who were honoured

Delhi Collage of Art's fine art courses are very popular consisting of different durations- 2 years, 1 year , 6 months, 3 months and monthly courses in Painting, Sculpture, Applied Art and Photography. It operates from localities like Safdarjung Enclave, Rajouri Garden and Uttam Nagar. According to Mr. Ashwani Kumar Prithviwasi , the young and dynamic Principal of Delhi Collage of Art, it has collaboration at present with Indira Gandhi National Open University and conducts one year certificate courses in Applied Art and Painting. Beside furnishing good education the college recognizes the talent and honors the great art gurus.

Every year Delhi Collage of Art organizes a cultural evening and students perform plays and dances. This year on such an occasion the college honored veteran artist, Jatin Das with ' Life Time Achievement Award'. B.C. Sanyal awards were given to Anupam Sud (artist), Krishen Ahuja (artist and photographer), Giriraj Prasad(Pottery), Dr. A.N. Goswami (trains art teachers), Mrs. & Mr. Satya Narayan (Madhubani Painters), Paramjeet Singh(artist), Ishan Bahuguna(artist), Amitava Bhowmick (sculptor), Dinkar Kowshik (artist), O.P. Sharma (photographer), Megh Raj Arya(activist, poet) and R.S. Verma (Art administration). ■

RAAVANLEELA

The scenario is a Ramleela being enacted in a village. When the curtain rises, the audience is restless. People have been waiting for more than an hour for the Ramleela to begin. Finally they start pelting with shoes, tomatoes and eggs – the manager comes on the stage with folded hands beseeching the public to calm down. He is in a spot because Raavan has not got his act together as the makeup man has not turned up and begs to be excused. Raavan out of rage moves out and leave the show. In an amateurish Ramleela at countryside situation becomes chaotic, humorous because of the involvement of all non-serious, disinterested and untrained members of the society enacting characters from Ramayana. In the process, situation turns hilarious when boisterous Kartar Singh turns Ramleela into Ravan leela and refuses to die if his demand of hike in fees is not accomplished. The organizer apologizes for this premature ending. He is again pelted with eggs etc. Music starts playing in the background & he gyrates to its tune. Ramleela in the ends turns out to be a true Ravanleela.

Yatri, The Theatre Repertory is one of the oldest Hindi theatre repertories in India established in 1979. The cast in this 2 hours long theatre which is running

at Prithvi Theatre, Mumbai includes:
Ashok Sharma, Gautam Jain, Gagan Riar, Om Katare, Sukant Goyal, Apurbh Ieshaan, Arpit Sharma Rohit Sharma, Dharmendra , Mukund Bhatt, Anand Lalwani, Kavita Waadhawan, Noori Khan, Shweta Sinha, Avneesh, Deeksha Sonalkar, Shashwita Sharma & others.
The play is written by Dr. Kusum Kumar and directed by Om Katare. The music is given by Gagan Riar and costumes by Jyoti Madnani. ■

STUPA 18 GALLERY

Vijender Sharma

Stupa 18 Gellery of Noida organised a group show of paintings titled *Binates of form and fill*. The participating artists were Prof. O.P. Sharma, Vijender Sharma, Sudip Roy Hemraj, Mohan Singh, Vinod Kumar Goswami.

O. P. Sharma's works were a distinct take off from the earlier tantricformations long associated with the artist. Yet there is a rootedness to the earlier works despite the current works' non-graphic and free-flowing format. Comparatively large sizes allow the viewer ample opportunity to concentrate on the central image of a primeval darkness groping upwards to an enlightened state, visualised through a glowing orb of sunshine.

Artist Vijender Sharma's latest canvas depicting the

image of the bewitching damsel holding a rose, as also a dagger in the backdrop, bespeaks a multiplicity of thoughts. His canvases become powerful statements of irksome content, cobbled from images that depict the duplicity of our everyday interactions, thereby making art a meaningful critique of the current situation.

The sheer classicism of Sudip Roy's art as seen in these works uplifts them to a poetic level. It was not narrative that makes one come back for a second look at them. The texture of the skin tones, the drapery and the play of light brings out the mystique of the forms and records a feeling of high romance through the atmospheric aura created around the subjects.

Mohan Singh's works, through their graphic squiggles, their colour patches, their overlay of flat splashes of colour, lure the viewer closer and entice one to decipher the message of daily existence coded through artistic devices.

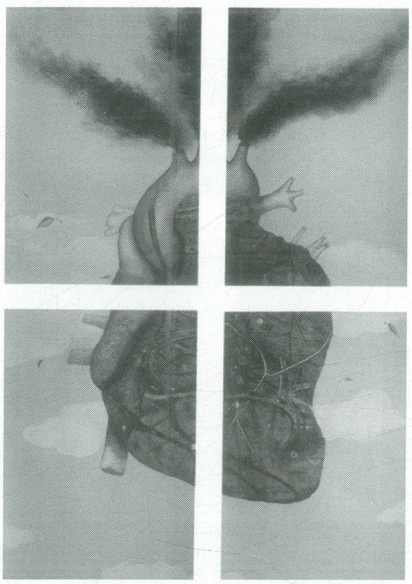
The large canvases at this exhibition by Hemraj, concentrated more on imagery rather than form and that was what made them so riveting. The patterns that emerged therefore invited viewers to interpret them as evocations of Tantric art, as definitions of Sufi thought, or even a metamorphosis, that encapsulates the cycle of life from a nebulous beginning to a larger and more ambivalent spread.

Vinod Goswami's human forms had a siminal quality of childlike charm and their tone-on-tone finish gave the image a sophisticated feel. The simple shapes also heighten the basic tonality of the work, shifting from ochre to a dull yellow, or a study in blues with a streak of black forming a dramatic counterpoint. ■

ESCAPADE

Blaise Joseph

Aura Fine Arts Realm Pvt. Ltd. is an art initiative started by Akshay Parnami, a practicing photographer and art connoisseur based in Baroda. The aim of the firm is to act as a catalyst in initiating contemporary art activities and starting a dialogue between the artist and the viewer. A show was organised at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi from 6th to 9th Novenber, 2010. The participating artists were Arbind Kumar Sinh, Akashay Parnami, Anup Akhar Pandey, Banjoy, Blaise Joseph, Sambhu Kumar, S. Vijyaraghavan, Vijay Krishna. ■



S. Vijyaraghavan

4 YEARS PROFESSIONAL FINE ART Course

Also 2 Years/1 Year/6Months/3 Months/Monthly Courses

- PAINTING
- SCULPTURE
- APPLIED ART
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- REGULAR
- PART TIME
- SUNDAYS
- SHORT TERM

IGNOU DCA DELHI COLLAGE OF ART

DELHI COLLAGE OF ART

Regd. with Govt. of N.C.T. of Delhi
Branch : B-2/77, Basement, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi-110029
Branch : B-7/7, Basement, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi-110027
Regd. Off. : S-31, IInd Floor, Param Puri Chowk, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi-110059
Phone: 9891555666, 9818513100, 011-46026841, 41448041
Website: www.delhicollageofart.com, **E-mail:** delhicollageofart@gmail.com

CREATIVE MIND
The Magazine on Art, Literature & Culture

S U B S C R I P T I O N F O R M

For
One year
You Pay: Rs. 600/-
You Get : 4 Issues
Your Gift :
Free Postage
inside India

For
Two years
You Pay: Rs. 1100/-
You Get : 8 Issues
Your Gift :
Free Postage +
Rs. 100/- Discount

Gift
CREATIVE MIND
to
your friend

Please fill up

I am sending Rs.....
towards subscription of 'Creative Mind' for a period of 1 year / 2 years:
Name :.....
Address :.....
.....
.....
Tel. .....Mob. .....
E-mail :.....
Cheque/DD No.....
Bank.....Date.....
Cheque/DD should be drawn in favour of
Creative Mind Publications

CREATIVE MIND

CREATIVE MIND PUBLICATIONS
B-84, Duggal Colony, Khanpur Extension,
New Delhi-110062, Ph. : 09210455360, 09999262643
E-mail: creativemind_p@yahoo.com
creativemindpublications@hotmail.com

MEGA SOLO SHOW OF 11000 PAINTINGS DIVINE FLOWERS

BY
BALJIT CHADHA

Laura Heggestad
Such beautiful, unpredictable gestures! I feel right "in the moment" with these flowers.and gesturality!

Ted Hebbler
Hi Baljit....your works are outstanding... love your use of color...ted.

Vicki Housel
Incredible! This looks like blown glass on canvas to me. Beautiful, vibrant works you have. .

Laura Heggestad
The flowers and plants sweep together like a wave. Lovely composition and gesturality!

WORLD RECORD

10"X13" MIX MEDIA ON PAPER

23rdJAN-2011

http://artistwebsites.com?affiliateid=A13248

Lizzy Forrester
My favourite. I very much admire the freedom and energy in and behind this one! Great work Baljit, Lizzy

Daniela Ionesco
You paint beautiful flowers in this very particular style, it looks to me like a special varnish paint on paper.

Ted Hebbler
Hi Baljit.....wow you are very prolific... love to see all of your new works from day to day.kep them coming..ted.

Julie Lueders
I love the bold statement this flower makes, it jumps at you and says HI,, a wonderful uplifting painting!!

Studio Vasant
An exclusive gallery for contemporary art

22, G.F.Hauz Khas Village, St. No. 2, New Delhi-110016
Ph: 011-46012292 / 9811142494, E-mail:studiovasant39@gmail.com
Website: www.studiovasant.com

Hospitals/Hotels/Ngo's can co sponcer this show

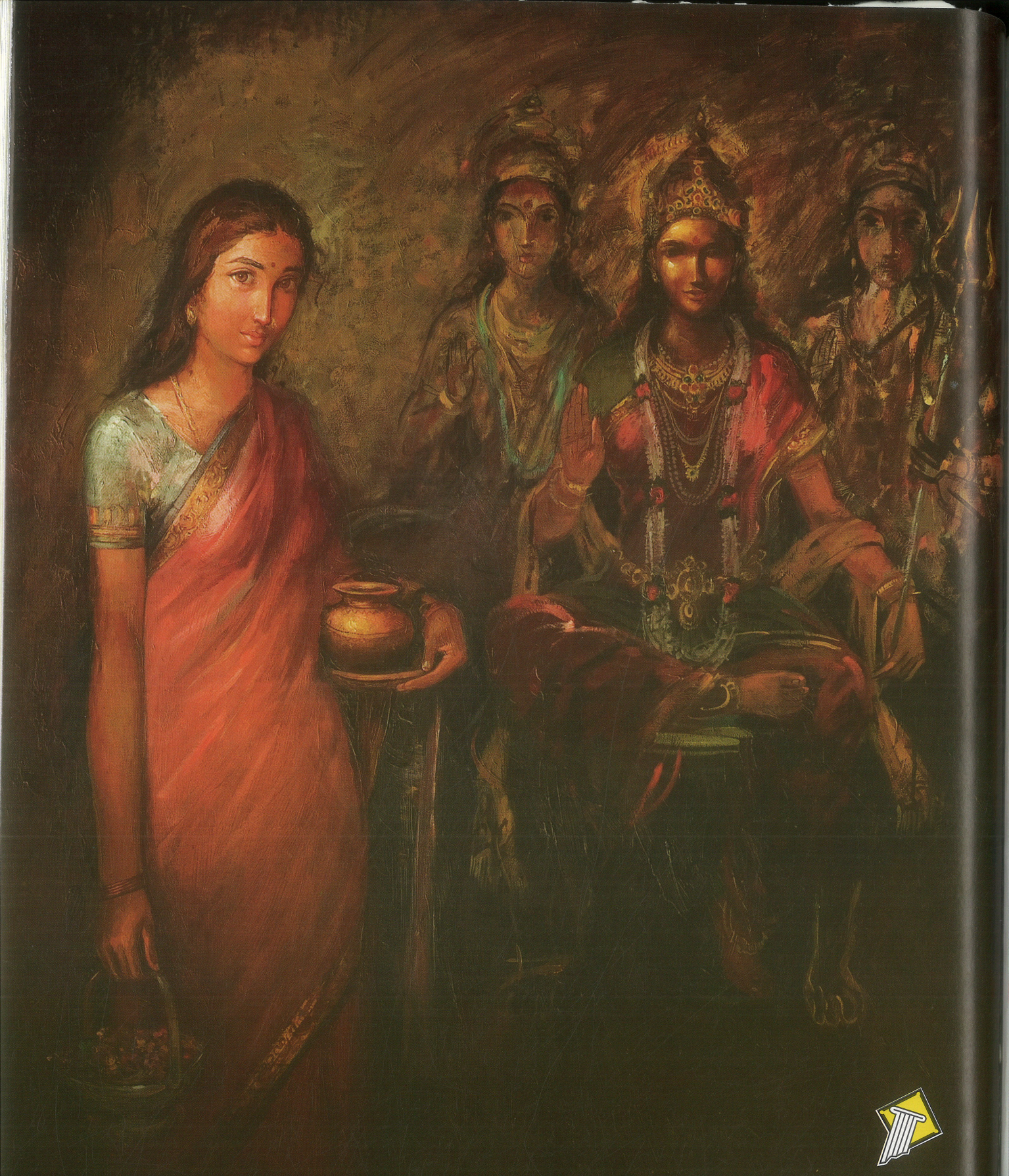
Acrylic on Paper, 31"X41"

NARENDER PAL SINGH

Gallerie Alternatives

102, DT Mega Mall, DLF City, Phase - I, Gurgaon-122002, Haryana
Tel-0124 4381439, Mobile-09818227501, E-mail - contact@galleriealternatives.com
11am-7pm,Tuesday closed

www.galleriealternatives.com



C. Prakash
Oil On Canvas
Size 48"x60" Inches

M.E.C. Art Gallery
70-B First Level, Khan Market
New Delhi-110003
Contact - Mob: 9811039741
ecartgallery@gmail.com

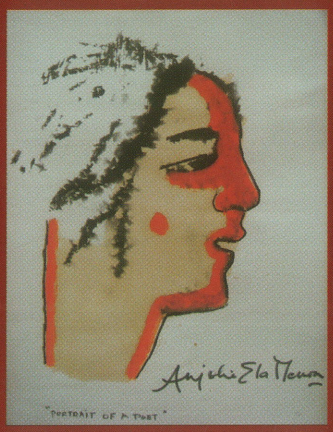
Nilanjana Nandy

We Are Sorry Witnesses In Our Own Cause, Acrylic on Canvas, 30" x 40"

Suruchi
Art Gallery

C-16, Sector 26, Noida-201301. Tel.: 91-120-4266873, Fax: 91-11-26921616
e-mail: info@suruchiartgallery.net
www.suruchiartgallery.net

Yusuf Arakkal

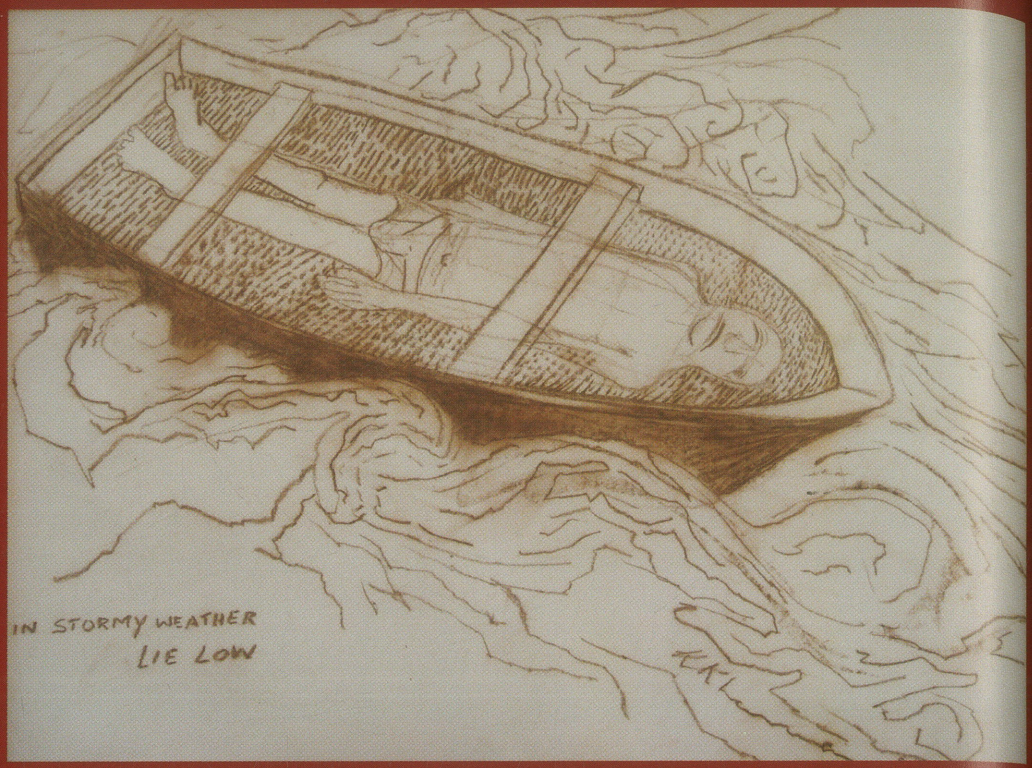


Anjoli Ela Menon

Achutan Kudallur

K.G. Subramanyan

Chandranath Acharya



Krishen Khanna

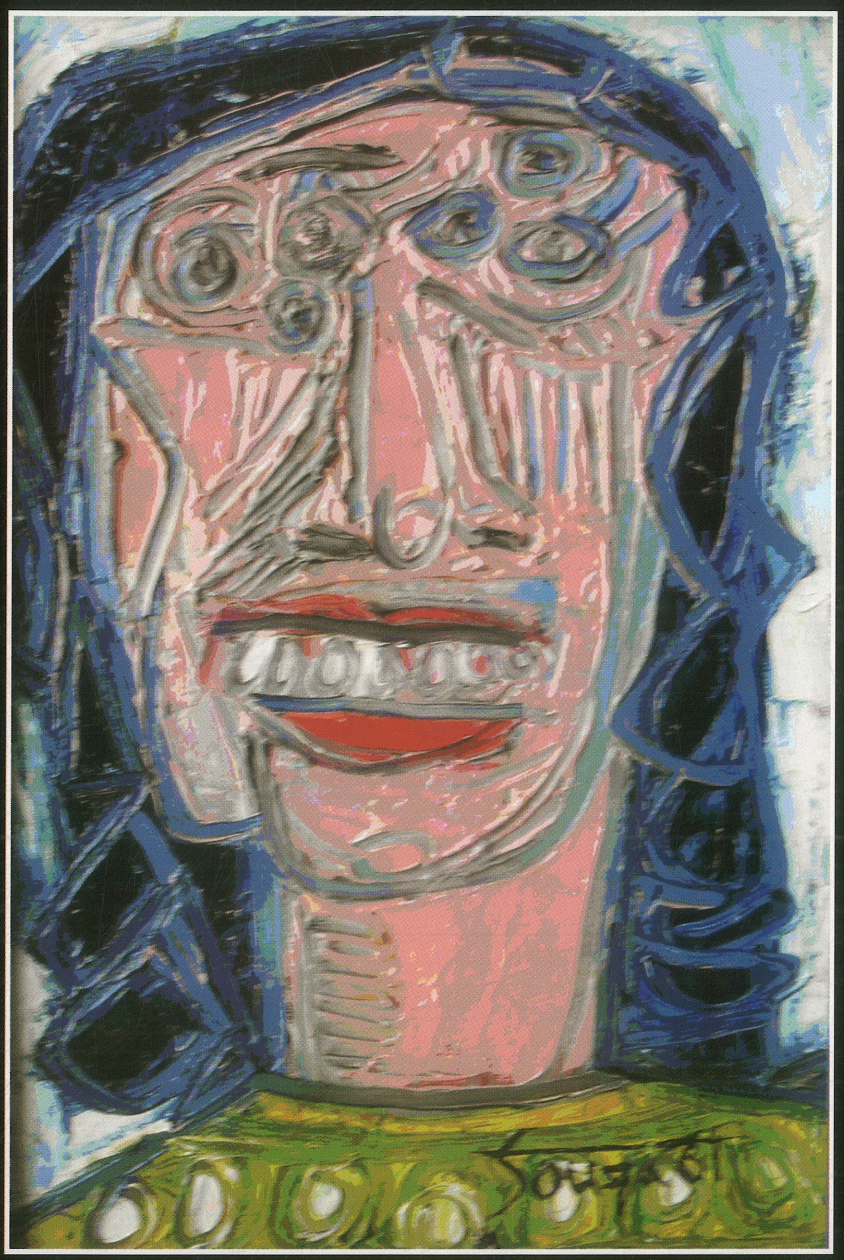
The Gallery has an exclusive
In house Art Shop,
produces corporate gifts and other
Artefacts in Copper, Ceramics, Table wares
Cloths products like Silk Scarves and stoles,
T-shirts using the works of contemporary artists.

GALERIE
saraArrakkal

156, 4th main, beml layout, itpl road, bangalore -560066
telefax : 918041162622, email: sa0822@gmail.com
website : www.galeriesaraarkkal.com

Progressive Art Gallery

presents
an exhibition of paintings & drawings by
"Progressive Artists Group"
in January 2011



F N Souza Oil on Canvas,1961

at

Gallery Defence

23 Defence Colony Market, New Delhi -110 024
Phone : +91 11 41005508, Fax : +91 11 41555889, Mobile : +919810040119
E-mail: progressiveartgallery@gmail.com
www.progressiveartgallery.com

HEM RAJ

(Since 1936)

Dhoomimal Gallery

www.dhoomimalgallery.com